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ALIXIS

□ J.W.COSTELLO □

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ALIXIS

A TALE OF THE HAREM

BY

JOHN W. COSTELLO



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ALIXIS

I

Where languid pilgrims seek a magic spell,
To foster doctrine or to banish care,
Beneath the influence of Jacob's Well,
I first inhaled the tranquil desert air—
Life's first breath—would to heaven it ended there;
And learned to love the vales and margent hills,
The olive orchards and the cedars rare,
And friends of childhood whose endearment thrills
The soul with sweet acclaim, the heart with rapture
fills.

II

My steps in childhood traversed sacred scenes
Where God to man His glory first made known;
Among ancient ruins where Clio's peons
Gather fruitage from the wreckage strewn
O'er vale and hill of idol, altar, throne.
Throughout the valley where the cattle grazed,
Of Jew and Gentile and the Bedouin drone,
I saw the steps of Time and lights that blazed,
And one by one the strokes which man's construc-
tions razed.

III

And like the Hebrews of the olden school,
Who strove to compass what the fates decreed,
I learned the articles of faith by rule,
That none might tempt me to renounce my creed,
Or, feigning Islam, to deny my breed;

But true to God's dominion and His will,
I strove to nurture and support the seed
He planted with us in a savage till,
That ages still to come might have of faith a fill.

IV

How oft my fancy peopled all the vale
With sages venerable, and soldiers gray;
And watched each system of dominion fail,
While sage or soldier held a jealous sway!
How tribes divided for internal fray,
Instead of joining 'gainst a foreign foe;
How Envy trapped us, in her lusty way,
And pitched our strength against our kinsman's
 blow,
So that when blood was shed our own was sure to
 flow!

V

How oft I pondered on the inspired word—
On prophets rising at the voice of God;
On how the martyrs, in their silence, heard
The voice of heaven their endeavors prod,
To seek the pathway then so seldom trod!
How oft I wondered how their wisdom won
The boon we crave for, the eternal nod
And sacred sanction for the life begun
By those who curbed the will and said, "Thy will be
 done!"

VI

That voice I cried for, while my soul was full,
But, like the Pharisee, I prayed in vain;
My mind was crowded with the rack and lull
Of toil and folly, ecstasy and pain,
Which left no entrance for a voice to gain.
Then dark misgivings of dismay and dread

Crept through my fancy, till the Hebrew plain
Held life's fulfilment—the drudgery ahead,
Whose tightly closing coils embraced my daily bread.

VII

I felt the conflict twixt the will and soul,
The jarring struggle for supreme command;
Like quakes in empire it destroyed control
Of sacred passion, and in aspect grand
Allured my fancy to the Tempter's hand,
Where Will in triumph scoffed the threatened
doom,
And led me forward to the golden strand,
Where Fancy's pictures show the world in bloom,
Without a taint of toil, a tragedy or tomb.

VIII

I awoke to learn the fate of all mankind—
To feel when stricken the Destroyer's skill:
That Envy leads us to the Demon's mind
When soul is parted from the urgent will;
That hell and church the same condition fill
When Hatred blossoms in the apse of each.
What years have vanished since the Sermon's thrill
Informèd teachers how they all should teach,
And those who served the Lord, what lessons they
should preach!

IX

What thousands followed the Disciples' call
To seek the spirit of the Master dead,
To soothe and comfort and absolve the thrall
Of ruthless sinners by temptation fed;
How converts flourished and how fast they fled
To pagan cities to make known their God,
Leaving Israel, for which the Saviour bled
To follow Allah when Mahomet's nod
Sent fierce invaders forth to burst the Christian pod!

X

The inspiration of our sacred sires,
Detailed in scripture and in legend old,
No longer fans the sin-consuming fires,
Since Mammon coaxed us to relax our hold
And seek, like him, for venal power and gold.
Thus Vanity, the shrewdest child of hell,
Spread false ambition o'er the chosen fold,
And man the tempted to the tempter fell
Without a sacred thought, an anthem or a knell.

XI

And still, O Clio! must thy muse despair,
Since current chroniclers the truth defy,
And like the counterfeit the false prepare,
To make our exploits blossom in a lie!
'Tis Might's achievement justice to deny
The fallen foeman from his station free;
'Tis Power the victor narrates to decry
The ruthless triumphs of the enemy,
Ere Judgment shaped his fall to school in history.

XII

'Tis Justice seeking to encompass crime,
That bids fanatics shape their fearful dreams;
As every evil must succumb in time
To Faith's advances and the zealot's themes,
Which with the justice and the judgment teems;
'Tis Justice, rousing the eternal storm,
That guides the prophets o'er the cluttered streams
Of sin's existence; 'tis the rising swarm
Of Life's controlling fates—of forces new and warm.

XIII

Though sacred memories forever rest
Where saint and martyr for opinion died,
And fill with penitence the sinner's breast,

Who seeks salvation through the portals wide
Of Christ's affection, where all tears are dried,
Yet close communion with those sacred shrines
Begets a freedom which the faith denied;
And doubt encircles like idæan vines,
Till Trust exchanges creed for heathen spells and
signs.

XIV

So here where Love, by God and Christ revealed,
Brought inspiration from the dark unknown,
Mahomet's cult commands the chosen field,
And Christian seeds a Moslem fruit have grown.
Our greatness and our glory long have flown
To bless the settlements of distant lands;
Yet faithful rabbis striving still alone,
Attempt to rescue from the spoilers' hands
This vale by heaven decreed to nourish Israel's bands.

XV

Within the vale where placid Hebron hides,
In sandalled feet I plied the shepherd's trade;
And oft I wandered on the Dead Sea's sides
Or traced the Jordan through the Carmel's glades
Where Christ's forthcoming by the Baptist prayed,
Burnt fear in kings while prophets glowed with
pride,
To hear an augury in truth arrayed,
To ruffle empire and its pomp deride,
And bring to every heart what arrogance denied.

XVI

O, peaceful valley! peaceful in my youth,
When pangs of childhood but a moment last;
O, blessed Hebron! 'tis in simple truth
I seek the fancies which my childhood cast,
Like haloed excerpts from the joyful past!

But childhood suffers not from want or care,
Nor youth more potent in a sphere more vast,
While willing parents all the burdens bear,
Nor ask the busy world their weighty load to share.

XVII

From Machpelah's cave—Jacob's resting place,
Above the ashes of his favored sire—
I viewed the kingdom that he left his race
And thought of Esau and his lost empire.
But crafty Jacob! How his fortunes fire
The dazzling moments with successful grind,
Till power invites him to the shores of Tyre!
We doubt his justice till in truth we find
That so much good can spring from such an evil
mind.

XVIII

My childhood passed like an enchanted dream,
And left the music of the angels' wings
To guide my soul along life's sluggish stream,
To fairy waters where the siren sings.
The harp of youth, which makes peasant-born
kings,
Allured my fancy from my birth astray,
And fashioned beauty and the tawdry things
Of wealth and plenty on my mind to prey,
Until the gleam of Hope shone forth as clear as day.

XIX

The faith of Israel, for which prophets bled,
Claimed musing moments from my youthful hours;
The sins of Europe, o'er my country spread,
Awoke a hatred for all foreign powers;
As here the vanity of Beauty's bowers
Claims Folly's vassals and the true and chaste.
'Tis meet it should be, since our homage flowers

Before proud Mammon, and we aid him taste
The innocence which makes of poverty a waste.

XX

My father augured like an Ezra bred,
Of plagues and famines to subdue the heart,
And wring repentance from those fashion wed
To ease and pleasure in the royal mart.
But still the alien, acting well his part,
In spite of curses, prophesies and all,
Would land among us like a misspent dart,
And draw our traffic to his filthy stall,
To swell some distant sea or fill some foreign hall.

XXI

The loyal rabbis, striving to reclaim
Their fathers' heritage from foreign foes,
Like hadjis wander o'er the desert flame,
Through vales of famine and where plenty grows,
Nor stay their efforts for the taunts and blows
Of proud intruders, who obstruct their way,
But suffer gaily that at last repose
For them and kindred in their native clay,
Might crown their ardent souls and give their race
the sway.

XXII

They begged me settle some neglected place,
Lest crafty aliens should our fields obtain;
To live among them and enjoy my race,
Nor seek with strangers for a storied gain,
Arising mythlike from some foreign plain.
They told how hatred for my race had grown
In Western empires like the shah's domain,
And how the Moslem heart had turned to stone
Since fate condemned the hold we once proclaimed
our own.

XXIII

They told how Christians, advocating Love,
Give birth and growth to universal hate;
How persecutions, in their mercy wove,
Pursue our footsteps, like a prescribed fate
Across the empires and in courts of state;
How spleen and envy and malicious tongue
Impair our prospects where we emigrate,
And how our triumphs from the ages wrung,
'Are claimed as foeman's fame, as foeman's praise are
sung.

XXIV

They begged me listen to the wisdom gleaned
From trial and travel and privation's toll,
And not, like Harold, from temptation weaned,
Across the countries like a pilgrim stroll
In search of comfort for a famished soul.
My mind was calm, my conscience should be clear,
'Cause never tempted by the bawd or bowl;
So why seek strangers whom we hold in fear,
When Love rules in our vale and all our race holds
dear!

XXV

They argued thus my wild desire to tame,
My boyish heart with wisdom to subdue;
But youth is striving for the pyre of fame
Where tribulations and contentions stew,
While millions strive for what is reached by few.
I listened calmly to their caution kind,
Nor little heeded that I e'er should rue
The wilful temper and the reason blind,
That dam the souls of power ere they perfection
find.

XXVI

O fleeting youth, how reckless is thy soul,
How self-determined are thy airy schemes;
What fancies bid thee abdicate control
Of mind and muscle for the reeling dreams
Of love and glory, what allurements teem
In mirth and nonsense and exciting play!
How everlasting seem thy vital streams
When jest and frolic influence the way,
And O, how light advice falls on the blithe and gay!

XXVII

To youthful eyes the distant hills are crowned
With gold and promise like a plunger's bet
That seeks each enterprise of doubtful sound;
Each vale as fruitful as the orchards set
In Eden's garden, ere our parents met
The first temptation; each turbulent sea
As full of fishes as the laden net
Of trade and commerce can convey to lea:
Thus distant regions shine like stars of high degree.

XXVIII

My parents now were gathered to the dust,
And left me helpless in my native vale;
As all their efforts centred in the trust
That hope and heaven would in time prevail,
And lift from Israel the obscuring veil.
So I was nurtured on what faith would do
When faith should fathom where the wrongs as-
sail,
And kept my life to Moses' doctrine true,
To be in heaven's care when friends were far and
few.

XXIX

So I was helpless when the alien's gold
Secured the valley where my kindred slept,
And left me houseless in my father's hold,
Without a purpose like a highland klept,
To serve a master where my father kept
Such aids and servants as his duty claimed.
So now through pride and poverty I wept,
And for misfortunes my ancestors blamed,
While hatred filled my soul and frenzied passion
flamed.

XXX

I lived with neighbors without purpose fixed,
Or traveled aimlessly from place to place,
Enjoying pictures that the seasons mixed
With rarest beauty, elegance and grace,
For here the blossoms wear perfection's face.
As every leaflet mingles with the sky,
The tints of heaven and the timely trace
Of earth's adornment—the diffusing dye
That shades the last of life with colors rare and high.

XXXI

I served the reapers in the harvest field,
Or with a sickle reaped the golden grain;
The wheat and barley in abundant yield,
Spread like a mantle o'er each hill and plain;
And all the valley to the distant main
A harvest coverlet of riches rolled.
The priceless jewels of successful gain—
Less soul-inspiring than the haughty gold—
Before me spread their charms where'er my vision
strolled.

XXXII

Though Ceres coaxed, my mind was ill at ease;
Like a wind-swept sail tacking 'gainst the wind,
No port in view, and changed by every breeze,
I looked beyond my fancied joys to find.
As new-born cubs are deaf and dumb and blind
To every agency of sound and light;
Their reason travels in the dreamy grind
That brings to humans their despairing blight,
So I to reason deaf let dreams usurp my sight.

XXXIII

Like the butterfly on the Kashmere flowers,
That lightly flits among the plants and blooms,
And in the sunshine to the skyward towers
But hides in shelter from descending glooms,
I wandered joyfully to seek the looms
Of fame and fortune in surrounding towns,
Where fortune flourished and where ancient tombs
Protect the ashes that the world renowns,
As many sceptres swayed and wore the royal crowns.

XXXIV

O fortune! how thy fickle fibres draw
The heart of youth to seek thy tempting goal,
How rich retainers in their proud *éclat*
Confuse and dazzle the aspiring soul;
How thrifty avarice adores thy dole
When flung to poverty with trumpet blare,
A rich investment from thy greedy toll,
Enriching thee with confidence and prayer;
And oh! how far thy flight above each toil and care!

XXXV

And Fame, emblazoned on the mind of youth
By book and chronicle, a blazing star,

Attracts the guileless like an inspired truth,
To seek thy promises in peace and war!
How loud the clatter of thy traveling car
From age to age since fame in murder rose!
How dense the plunder settled near and far
Since wealth assumed to wear thy cast-off clothes,
And justify thy crimes by driving home thy blows.

XXXVI

The local triumphs tempted me at first,
The homely fields where Jew or Gentile fought,
The cities famous for the names they nursed,
And vales where prophets in obtrusion wrought.
Each town its heraldry, each stream its thought,
Each hill its sacrifice, each street its fame,
And all are crowded where Perfection taught
That truth and purity destroy the flame
Of carnal, selfish joy and sordid sinners' shame.

XXXVII

Beneath the palms in Gethseméne's shade,
I loitered gaily from the noonday sun;
Or noted landmarks by the ancients made,
Ere human progress had its course begun
In deep seclusion where the poets won
The much-sought triumph with prophetic eye,
But flaming progress, ever overdone,
Controls the spirit of our destiny,
And saps the soul from power where burdened banners fly!

XXXVIII

I saw the patriarchs—the olive trees—
Beneath whose shade Christ sacred lessons taught,
And felt my brow enlivened by the breeze
That in the garden inspiration caught.

O Gethseméne! what a sacred thought,
To muse in silence where a God adored!
Then view the ravages that man hath wrought
Through fire and famine and his thirsty sword,
And ask, O God, how long till justice be restored?

XXXIX

I watched the guests of occidental fame,
Our temples, tombs, and shrines deface;
But they have mounted with success the flame,
While we are fanning to ignite the base.
They represent a stranger, foreign race
That prospers richly on the blooms of time;
No marks of ages of oppression trace
Their ragged profiles of decay and grime
Across each careworn face which spare not youth or
prime.

XL

Like Judea the powerful states of earth,
In triumph glitter and commanding sway,
Control the fashion for the weaker birth,
Till vice and folly and the ruthless gay,
Ignoble servants of the state betray
The people's heritage for selfish gain.
Then crime is jeweled by the lights Decay
Employs to color a defenseless reign.
So down each sinks at last—on earth another stain!

XLI

Beer-sheba's ruined walls no more betray
The surly impotence of human power,
As all are weathered, crumbled to decay,
Like blighted blossoms from a last year's flower—
Time's solemn censure of our treasured dower
That coaxes conquest and allures the heart

To soft emotions of a ruling hour.
But lo! our cherished dreams in haste depart
Whene'er the law of change lets fly its feathered
dart.

XLII

The God of Israel no longer pleads,
Nor guides the footsteps of His chosen race;
The sacred voice the fane no longer heeds,
Nor prophets lead us to a cheerful place:
The lusts of life have changed proud Israel's face;
Her children wander to the golden shores
Where Moses' heritage their lives replace;
And leave the country that each heart adores
Till vice unbridled walks through all its open doors.

XLIII

Now o'er our wasted plains the nomad rides,
And antiquarians for treasure seek;
The voice of Abraham no longer hides
Among the mountains or the deserts bleak,
To warn the erring or in friendship speak
To some Elijah of his struggling line:
The voice is stifled, while earth's judgments wreak
The purest vintage of our lordly vine,
To give our race the dregs, our enemies the wine.

XLIV

How frail a structure do we mortals build,
Who make great wealth or lineage our aim!
Our mansions crumble, time corrodes the gild,
While offspring drag proud ancestors to shame.
No rule of life! applaud it ye or blame
The greedy ancestor who treasured gold,
To leave a heritage and lasting name
To kin which dwarf nor loose the miser's hold,
Till through supine decay their liberties are sold.

XLV

Against the erring few I should not prate,
Since nature from their blood has filled my veins;
Though doom of empire has absorbed my fate,
And memory chides me with her puling strains
O'er false progenitors who held the reins,
And tolerated loosely Roman greed,
That nursed the parasite which progress drains—
Fruitless Ashtaroth and her fearful creed—
Which made our land a waste and sowed the Pagan
seed.

XLVI

Our prophets sang of Zion and declared
That every plague foreshowed the promised land,
As only those for whom Jehovah cared
Must feel chastisement from his mighty hand;
But tempests tore the skies, simooms the sand:
Our peaceful valley ruffled like the sea,
No longer nourished, yet in aspect grand,
Spread its mirage and promise false to me;
I heeded not but sought the shore of Galilee.

XLVII

That central figure of historic fame,
Whose rustic grandeur Hiram oft' inspired,
Is like the ashes of a wasted flame—
The banquet board where greatness once retired;
Its lazy ripples like a youth half tired,
Creep sluggishly along, then backward roll;
But times there were when every wave was fired
With raging tempests like a troubled soul,
That effervesced its breast like vapor from a coal.

XLVIII

I guided pilgrims from the Christian land
To scenes dramatic in religious lore,
To Peter's grotto and the inlet strand,

Where Andrew anchored when the tempest tore
 The placid waters with an angry roar;
 To hills and caverns and the aged palms,
 Where saints and Saviour wandered to adore
 The King of heaven when the trying qualms
 Of conscience overwrought implored exhaustless
 balms.

XLIX

How they gazed in wonder at the worn rocks,
 And prostrate falling touched them with their kiss,
 Where Matthew ventured from the tempest shocks,
 To meet his Saviour and receive His bliss!
 They greeted objects which the scriptures miss,
 But long traditions give them lasting praise:
 The trees or valleys or the scenes like this,
 Where saint or Saviour in those tragic days
 Prayed for the hope of man or suffered in divers
 ways.

L

But soon I wearied of this doleful throng,
 For pious penitents act sick and sore—
 The worst of comrades for the hale and strong
 Whose wild emotions their pretensions bore—
 And from my duties all relations tore;
 Like the prodigal whose dimensions swell
 Above the hero of romantic lore,
 I waved adieu to woodland, stream, and dell,
 And sought the busy world where fates their tri-
 umphs tell.

LI

Northward bound, the heavens decreed my course,
 Some hidden magnet drew my steps along;
 Some hopeful joy from Pleasure's foreign source
 Beguiled my path with frolic, laugh and song:
 And music rising from the toiling throng

Of happy gleaners cheered me as I passed;
The brawny reapers merry, hale, and strong,
A moment's notice on my movements cast,
As if my hurried step suspicion in me classed.

LII

Through Bashan's desert and the olive hills,
Where feast or famine is becoming fare,
I traveled fiercely toward the laughing rills
That errant wanderers discovered there;
But none were rippling in the haughty glare
Of that torrid sun which methinks ne'er shone
With burning fury on the desert bare,
With half the vengeance that its shafts were
thrown
Upon my wilting frame while struggling there alone.

LIII

If vibrant motion is eternal force,
My voice is sounding still despairing cries
Among the mountains where I found my course,
The first to train my soul to agonies,
Above whose burden it shall never rise;
But no responsive god assuaged my trust
Nor dealt me bounties from the leaden skies;
My path was thorny and the burning dust
Was flaming flood through which I groaned with
every gust.

LIV

Damascus walled, repulsive and severe,
Where ancient power in triumph often frowned,
Denies the quest of skill from far and near
To ape the conquests that her genius crowned,
Embraced me like a sea that knows no bound;
So broad it seemed, so prone to hold relief,

With towers of glory o'er the filthy ground—
The candid paradox of joy and grief,
Where man must be a slave, a pander or a chief.

LV

No move of mine the bektchi could escape,
While to the tcharshi thousands passed unseen;
The turbaned head, the yashmak and the crepe
Were signs of power beyond my race's lien:
For custom covers like an open screen
The face and figure of the native form;
But stranger garb, the lowly gait and mien
Provoke excitement and create alarm
Like lowering clouds and gloom before the driving
storm.

LVI

This city famous since the birth of man,
Where God placed Eden for his children's joy,
Condemns misfortune like the savage clan
That murder offspring when their shape annoy;
Her persecutions destined to destroy,
Are never silenced till beyond the hills,
In corpse or courage like a broken toy,
The one is hurried whose affliction fills
Her solitary power with racking fear and chills.

LVII

So northward still and further from the sea,
My footsteps by some guiding fate were led,
Through olive groves and fanes of ancient charity.
The gods no manna on my pathway spread,
Nor should they heed as faith from me had fled,
And left my bosom vacant as the waste
And lonely as the watch beside the dead,
In whom departure's gloom enticed the taste
Of duty kindly done or favor long erased.

LVIII

I wandered on through watered field and grove,
In clefts of rock, beastlike, I made a lair;
I courted herdsmen who like Arabs rove,
To seek companionship for my despair;
But none could aid or understand my care,
Who friendless, homeless, wandering alone
On, on, and ever on—I knew not where,
Nor why the plenty of my youth had flown—
But God expects a plant from every seed that's sown.

LIX

O'er vineclad hills and streamlets coursing green,
Each day more hopeful rose my beckoning star;
I came at length upon the famous scene
Where once Palmyra waged triumphant war,
Where still her ruins leave on earth a scar—
The tragic label of successful prey;
Her potent hour bred tyrants prone to mar
The noble impulse of her natal day,
And steal from minds their pride—the freeman's
shaping clay.

LX

Palmyra's column and her spacious halls,
Where greatness pondered and where beauty strove
To wear the laurel at the feasts and balls,
Are crumbling monuments of misplaced love;
There pride and beauty from her mansions drove,
By vulgar ribaldry the toilers' throng,
To seek in desert fare a safer cove,
Where virtue knows not obloquy nor wrong,
But grows supreme in power and independent strong.

LXI

The mind of Solomon is here displayed
In spreading arcades and extensive hall;

Obeying his counsel each design was laid
From perfect palace to the massive wall.
The temple serving God, the Sun and Baal
In mad successions like a thoughtless mind,
Is ready now to heed the muezzin's call,
And worship Allah if the Islam find
No fitter place for prayer, no structure more refined.

LXII

Religions, gods and idols have been lost
In mankind's efforts to unravel fate;
Each served an era at a fearful cost,
Then dwindled sadly low desire to sate;
While creeds connived through bigotry and hate,
To flatter heroes for destructive wars,
With thriving towns to plunder as the bait,
They banished progress by fraternal jars,
And left this hapless vale as lonesome as the stars.

LXIII

The creed whose argument is blade or dart,
Whose god is fostered by the shaft and spear,
May overpower but not convince the heart,
Nor plant a faith with Love surmounting fear.
Their creeds are now where some eventful year
The staid religions of the earth shall be,
Consigned to obloquy without a tear,
While man toils upward with his motives free,
Above the wrecks of church to serve his God's decree.

LXIV

I entered sacredly the ruined hall
Where famous courtiers trembled to adore
The proud Zenobia before her fall,
Before the conquest from her bosom tore
The pleasant coquetry and pique it wore—

The flame of passion and the love for show,
That gilded virtue like a frozen shore,
And dazzled weakness with a scorching glow
Which ere the Grecian pride had conquered every
 foe.

LXV

I viewed the columns where the palace stood,
Now ivy tangled or with moss grown green;
The halls of ebony from Zagros wood,
In mute oblivion, piloried between
The victors' arches and the banquet scene,
Where forgotten heroes their pomp displayed;
I thought what monarchs in those aisles had been,
What thoughts and passions in their breasts ar-
 rayed.
Or was it then as now—ambition's gory blade?

LXVI

But peace and comfort banished from my mind,
And grief and anguish planted in my heart,
Brought strange desires—that distant lands may
 find
That balm restoring from the poisoned dart,
The blessedness of life, its joy and tart—
So on I wandered to Euphrates' plains
Where Nimrod's empire from the Syrian part;
Where races come and go like worldly gains,
And naught but wreck or ruin of all the past remains.

LXVII

O human mockery! how strange the soul
That finds companionship in foreign lands,
Of foreign speech—the solemn or the droll!
Yet Shinar's valley like a mentor stands
To comfort toilers and the nomad bands,

The fruitful valley of the ancient world.
How grand the change from Syria's shifting sands
Which passing breezes through the treetops whirled,
Since Eden left her plains and bolts of wrath were
hurled!

LXVIII

Her golden harvest ripening in the sun,
Her luscious vintage fragrant on the vine,
Her olive orchards where the brooklets run,
Her docile oxen and her glossy kine
Convey support and baffle her decline.
Where life and luxury together stand,
The soul is dwarfed by lechery and wine;
Where plenty thrives and pleasure rules the land,
The dynasties must change before the shifting hand.

LXIX

Along the Tigris' verdant western shore,
Northward still my harassing way was drawn,
As if my journey at some open door
Would bid me enter some celestial lawn.
I struggled onward like a startled fawn,
With safe demands of mind and flesh denied;
Hoping ere long to greet empyrean dawn—
The graphic splendor of my mental pride—
Which cheered my lonely way since Israel's hope had
died.

LXX

The streams I swam that curbed my onward way,
And on their mossy bank my garb was dried;
The night to me was open as the day,
My failing strength assaults of clime defied,
While battling storms; in sunshine to abide
Within the home of never-ending peace;

My wakeful hours along the Tigris' side
Enticed me onward and refused to cease,
Till satisfied, my mind should irksome whims release.

LXXI

But nature limits what endurance craves,
And overtoil will sink the sturdy frame;
The lash of masters nor the will of slaves
Ne'er fires the spirit with the active flame
Which burns for human lives a lasting name;
But willing minds with steadfast purpose set,
Seeking triumphs, the shafts of hell would tame,
To banish heartache and contentment get
From Life's eventful course where man is doomed
to fret.

LXXII

The terrors of the doom before me rose,
When o'er the Tigris on the Zagros hills,
My strength exhausted from my toils and woes,
I sank fatigued between two mountain rills,
To lie and suffer from the worst of ills
That mortal cursed by heaven is doomed to bear—
To writhe in heat and shake beneath the chills
That swelled the fury of the mountain air,
Without a voice to soothe, without a friend to care.

LXXIII

When I awoke from my distempered dreams,
The pangs of sickness and the visions dread
Which crowd the mind with fears, the voice with
screams,
While life is hanging on a single thread,
And felt the soothing hands that held my head,
The soft brown eyes where love is wont to dwell,
The psychic touches which devotion spread,

I rose to bless this fair Armenian belle,
The fairest flower on earth, in Resin's lonely dell.

LXXIV

That life's more potent when restrained by fate,
My fleeting fancy hourly occupied;
The God I lost through treachery and hate,
Forgave the hour his mercy I denied
When blasts from heaven the vale of Hebron dried
To a parched desert where the shifting sand
Laid waste the region where my parents died.
For only heaven's King could choose the hand
That soothed my burning brow while fever's fury
fanned.

LXXV

Among strangers there and from troubles free,
I rose like one who owned a golden claim,
And felt the soothing hand—the fates decree—
My stubborn will and hostile spirit tame.
Rebellious contempt filled my soul with shame,
And with contrition filled my haughty mind;
For convalescence brought the wrong and blame
That calm reflections in repentance find:
That he must strive alone who strives against the
wind.

LXXVI

My heart announced her footsteps on the stones,
My choking voice would all her questions greet;
A burning breast and tremor through the bones
Would mar my motions when her form I'd meet;
Her voice would make my throbbing pulses beat
Like surging breakers on the Dead Sea shore;
Her song would lead me to Jehovah's seat,
Like Saul, the tyrant, stooping to adore
The dying Stephen's God whom he denied before.

LXXVII

When worldly minds in fancy find retreat,
When comfort falls from castles in the air,
When Pride is vanquished in the Will's defeat,
And selfish auguries reject despair—
E'en though the hopes of life and death are there
To mar the present with their doubts and creeds—
The mind is pinioned in Devotion's snare,
And lonely solace in contentment breeds,
With all the flowers for love, for folly all the weeds.

LXXVIII

And love it was that filled my boyish heart,
And erstwhile ugliness with beauty framed;
As little Cupid with his wingèd dart,
To stalk his victim with exactness aimed,
And all my wild chimeric fancies tamed.
The world's bitterness through reflection shone
Like sacred altars where my off'rings flamed
From Duty's sacrifice to heaven's throne,
And on the tempered winds my hateful past had
 flown.

LXXIX

And love it was that cleared my sullen brain,
And all my joyless visions chased away;
My night of poverty dawned day again,
And lonely wand'rings brought companions gay;
The shards of life that torture human clay,
When soul is lacking and attachment dead,
Become the ointment which all pains allay,
When venal suff'ring is by Pity fed,
And heals in every mind where hope and love are
 wed.

LXXX

In this secluded nook this modest maid
Of comely innocence and wealth obscure,
Of matchless beauty like a flower arrayed
In meek perfection, ever to insure
The plaudits of a world whose boasts endure
The turbid mixture of innocence and rest,
Revealed a soul developed and demure,
Kind enough for strength, generous to be blest,
If blessings ever fall where poverty is pressed.

LXXXI

My longing heart her ready eye discerned,
My surging soul found comfort in her sigh;
My stealthy glance her winsome smile returned,
As fondness sparkled in her seeking eye.
As soul affinities in concord lie,
So love makes harmony the fates control;
And never, never, can affection die,
That springs unbidden from a fervent soul!
It slumbers like the dead yet flames a living coal.

LXXXII

And convalescence brought me to the hills,
Where cashmere goats obeyed her pleasant call,
Where inspiration with enchantment thrills,
And ransoms pleasure from its abject thrall.
For selfish hopes which spread the morbid pal'
By love are banished and by love replaced;
And fervid rapture rises over all,
And leaves in life no barren tract or waste,
For cholers all decay when vain desire is chased.

LXXXIII

And with returning strength I wandered far
To seek the curious in tree and flower,

Among the wrecks of Time and ancient war,
The sole survivor of impotent power.
Though once did Providence His blessings shower
Among the ancient tribes of this fair vale!
But in their hearts, their love and pity sour,
The demon hoisted his destructive sail
Which caught the evil winds of lust and spear and
mail.

LXXXIV

And with me ever fair Alixis came,
While on the distant hills her cattle grazed,
And showed me valleys where immortal fame
Was born in men whom the later world praised;
And in whose daring deeds we all have gazed
Like wonder-stricken spectators whom chance
Had cast upon the scene where Glory raised
The ancient banner of our first advance,
To present luxury from Lethe's stupid trance.

LXXXV

Yet not within these vales can splendors thrive,
Nor genius soar aloft on ample wings;
For all but memory the tyrants rive,
And glory circles but the brows of kings;
Though suff'ring genius inspiration brings
From slimy hovels and the gory plains;
And each advancement through the ages rings,
And shapes opinion in its swelling strains,
Till all the earth enjoys its echoes and refrains.

LXXXVI

Though all her genius which the past can claim,
Bewailed in exile or in chains decayed,
Or sought in serfdom animation's flame
To lead the morbid soul from conflict's blade,

To fields Elysian where the seraphs prayed.
And still O Genius! are thy strains unheard
In this fair region, where mankind has strayed;
As clouds repose too thick for act or word
To pierce the lowering gloom of the ambitious Kurd!

LXXXVII

O Nineveh! Thy mossy ruins tell
How warlike man must perish by the sword!
Thy crumbling columns weather where they fell,
While wreck and ruin which Destruction poured,
Disgrace the altars where thy sons adored!
The works of man their makers can't survive,
Till man and nature strike a common chord;
As man from nature all his powers derive,
So without help of God he cannot hope to thrive.

LXXXVIII

And there, proud Nineveh, thy sins began,
When lords with competence to live at ease,
With brutal instinct glorified the man,
And sought the luxury that vice can please.
Such blighted judgment fell infection sees,
And ruin follows like a blasting wind,
The crumbling temples like the fallen trees
Obscure the vision of the seeking mind,
Till all to heaven's hope are deaf and dumb and
blind.

LXXXIX

Still we more potent than the fallen tribes,
With richer wisdom than the bards of yore,
Beget the sins of pharisees and scribes,
And follow leaders to damnation's door;
We mount the forum with demands for gore
When battered captains clamor for the fray,

And in the council eloquently soar,
Defending Moloch's life-destroying lay,
Thus catering to power when strength is ours to
sway.

XC

What massive structures are thy ruined walls,
Which still encircled by the dreary moats,
Proclaim the echoes of the shepherds' calls,
As when they circled thrice ten thousand boats!
Thy hills once peopled now are grazed by goats,
And excavations deep in Nimrud's mound,
Unearth the treasures to the worthless goats,
For which the freemen strove and slaves were
bound.
But where are they who owned the structures and
the ground?

XCI

Yet Ninus reared for everlasting life,
The costly temples and the golden throne;
Though weak and worn through foreign war and
strife,
He saved his structures and he lost his own.
And each successor when to manhood grown,
Was lured to conquest by this churlish dream;
As over each the sun of empire shone
Till strength was lagging like a sluggish stream,
So then she struggling fell beneath her weighty beam.

XCII

So now beneath three forest-covered mounds,
Thy phantom hopes are catacombed for aye;
Above thy palaces the wild deer bounds,
And wolves greet fiercely the approaching day;
The prowling hermits of the jungle stray

With careless insolence where once the sun
Was welcomed by that calm Assyrian lay,
Which primal worship in her splendor spun,
To greet the king of light whose favors she had
won.

XCIII

Persian Idolaters no more salute
The ambrosial heavens to greet the morn;
No more is heard the xylophone and lute,
Where the pageantry of empire was born;
The zigurats must never more adorn
A temple sacred to the god of day.
A stranger race impiously has torn
From mankind's breast the vain desire to stray
Among the pagan gods his conscience to allay.

XCIV

The snow is whitest when it falls from heaven,
Ere earth's corruption adds its filthy stain;
And like the dough it rises till the leaven
A force imbrues that all its atoms strain;
It levels beauty on the hill and plain
In downy splendor like an angel's bed,
Till the rack is risen and the crystals gain
The glare and glitter of a jeweled head;
Then every sphere subsides a borrowed light to shed.

XCV

The life is purest wrapt in swaddling clothes,
Ere false Ambition lures the soul astray,
Or fickle Vanity presumption shows,
As rightful leader of the moral way;
While sin may flourish in debasement gay,
Within the confines of its brief control;
The chords are vibrant with the siren lay

That fills the brothel and the flowing bowl,
Till self-abasement drowns the erstwhile upright soul.

XCVI

So with Nineveh, Palmyra, and Tyre,
So with Babylon, Syracuse, and Troy,
So with the city, so with the empire:
All are swept away where follies employ
The moral turpitude born to destroy!
So with the kingdom, republic, and state,
Where justice has stooped with greed to alloy;
For dead is their virtue and dumb their fate,
Where jealous envy glowers and love is drowned in
hate!

XCVII

Nor rest they from the toils of time secure,
Nor from their bosom springs the native seed;
As death to vice and folly they insure,
Nor suffer grow the life-alluring weed.
On regal purity the new lives feed,
Nor claim a current from the blood of old;
Yet each in time for sin will have to bleed,
Since man from want for competence is sold,
And vanity will rule since man is ruled by gold.

XCVIII

Thus empire rising from an ancient grave
Can ape perfection while the dew is on;
Her daughters virtuous, her sons are brave,
Her power is iordly to the eyes that con.
Yet such a day hath every empire one,
As every birth with ecstasy is hailed;
But flowers will wither when the dew is gone,
And charms will vanish when the form is mailed,
And fall shall every shrine where Love and Truth
have failed.

XCIX

From ruin to perfection I turned my gaze,
From Nineveh to Alixis my eyes.
To greet such splendor from the fiendish raze
Of Persian power makes the Moslem rise
From hissing serpents to the vaulted skies,
From the abode of hate to Mercy's bower;
For still some justice in his conduct lies,
When truth compares him with the ancient power,
That wrecked a fruitful vine to plant a sickly flower.

C

Ancient chronicles Alixis never read;
She viewed the ruins like the rugged plain,
As nature's compliment to Khor-su's bed,
Revealing temples where her waters strain,
As hidden splendors of the boundless vein
Of wealth concealed beneath the trembling deep
Or scraggy hills; the past nor tears nor pain,
Nor calm reflection could her bosom keep,
But for Armenia's wrongs she ever stooped to weep.

CI

Her sincere judgment, like the censor's traced
From traveled knowledge, by her sight was bound;
As culture's gifts her country never graced,
Since mosques were reared where Christians
blessed the ground,
And rural charities in plunder drowned.
But Truth and Justice lowly cradled lie,
Shod by poverty and by wisdom crowned;
While comely virtues in contentment sigh,
Nor seek the higher life for which the wretched cry.

CII

But time and temper ever nearer brought
Our heart's affection till my lips unsealed,

Expressed the burning, self-consuming thought,
And love in ecstasy her life revealed;
And all the channels of my soul congealed
In jealous triumph what my lips would speak;
And by her promise all my woes were healed,
As all my trust was in her blushing cheek,
Since from me fled the world, barren, bare, and bleak.

CIII

But in my lawless mind new troubles rose,
To test devotion and affection try;
My native hatreds like the marsh mist close
And bar all splendors from my wanton eye;
For crypt and synagogue again I sigh,
Nor feel the treachery of jealous creed,
Like tempest lowering in the stormy sky,
O'erspread my sight with famished trust and need,
And place me on the rack where love and faith must
 bleed.

CIV

The God of Abraham I must forsake,
And twice immersed become a neophyte;
Or grow in mind to where conceptions make
The God of old and Christ but one in might;
And struggle upward for celestial light,
Broader grow until doctrines disappear;
And then like fancy in her onward flight,
Seek naught but good and live in love and fear—
In love with Christian life, in fear of kinsmen near.

CV

Twixt love and faith like Pythias I stood,
And dreamt of Israel and lost reward;
But love's cloaked not beneath deception's hood,
Nor sinks in silence to destroy regard;

For Beauty charms both parasite and bard,
Nor leaves of doubt the shadow of a trace,
While Faith must nurse the cockle and the shard,
With future hopes to gain a higher place:
Beyond the tear-dewed grave she keeps her promised
face.

CVI

The charms of life nor terrors of the doom,
Against the mail of love cannot withstand;
For living passion, not the mouldering tomb
Controls the heart and ever guides the hand.
While creeds in secondary triumph stand
Between the passion and the fervent soul,
Quenching the flames that pedantry hath fanned,
And thawing the heart for Duty's safe control,
Then Love assumes command and guides o'er bar
and shoal.

CVII

That God and Love are one I early learned,
While twixt the two my brain was on the rack;
The glowing charms in Alixis discerned,
Made love beat wide an unretracing track,
Till from devotion I could not turn back.
So in such glowing thoughts my blissful eyes
Perfection sought where dream-drawn visions lack,
From want of higher things the power to rise
From morbid scenes of earth to joys beyond the
skies.

CVIII

With many a sigh I joined the Christian creed;
I felt in Christ I found the God of old,
And learned to trust in faith and live in deed,
Above the luxury of power and gold.

When to my breast I might Alixis fold,
The charms of life would permanently blaze;
And heaven would grasp me with a firmer hold,
Till from my eyes would fade the crucial glaze,
Which keeps the fettered soul in hatred's murky
haze.

CIX

Thus for Alixis every sacred tie
That bound my kindred to both God and man,
That weighed my conscience when the false was
nigh,
And tempered justice with the synod's ban,
As only charity for evil can,
Was by me abjured in the new-born light
Which rose to flicker while impulses fan
The weak emotions to a dizzy height,
To make a lasting day or never-ending night.

CHAPTER II.

I

But love is blighted lest profusion flings
An early competence to banish care ;
And man must rival the Osmanlis kings
In preparation of his nuptials fare ;
So I for conquest of the Van prepare,
To serve a stewardship among the Beys,
And earn an opulence to drown despair
In glowing splendors for the happy days,
When through the joys of life I'd sing Alixis' praise.

II

The empty kilers disappoint the heart,
When stern yeradjis resolutely strive ;
Though every anguish like a poisoned dart,
Affects the sympathies where most alive.
'Tis then temptations to destruction drive
The soul o'er sensitive through love and care,
And men their mercy in their madness rive,
To wrench from poverty sustaining fare,
Or build from Mammon's bones a fort against despair.

III

With tearful eyes I bade a sad farewell
To fair Alixis ere my course was drawn
From humble hammals in the forest dell,
To serve the chess of destiny as pawn—
The musdaji of imperial spawn—
To seek a fortune for our marriage hour.
But every hope is brightest at the dawn,
And distance tempers like a summer shower,
The fleeting strokes of time, the iron hand of power.

IV

A waste of wilderness the Van appears,
Though thousands on her hills and vales subsist;
Her agèd mountain to the heavens rears
His snow-capped columns, rising to resist
The fell intrusion of the sleet and mist
That reigns through summer on its dizzy height;
And menacing gather in threat'ning tryst,
Of om'nous poverty or frigid blight
From winter's icy glare while summer is in sight.

V

To serve the poor by sweeping in the byre—
My first employment on the shores of Van—
To gather tezek for the winter's fire,
Did not conform to my ambitious plan,
Which held me master, not a serving man.
But boyish hopes—delusions of the mind—
Are often banished by the sordid ban
Which selfishness decrees against his kind,
And teaches trusting youth his doubting self to find.

VI

I toiled a saka through Van's narrow streets,
Or watched the narghile 'gainst frigid raid;
And with the bektchi on his nightly beats,
I learned that boyish dreams must early fade;
As trenchant folly from conceit is made,
And life half worn in joy's maternal bower,
With tithes of luxury before it laid,
Conceives the impotence of plenty's shower
Which crowded joys on youth to rob the age of
power.

VII

Beneath my stewardship I wailed and groaned,
Yet for Alixis' sake I struggled on;

My heart against mankind was rashly stoned,
When from the Hebron I had outward gone,
In dreams a seraf but to serve a kahn.
The child must suffer for the parent's deed,
When childish troubles make them sadly con
Their meagre income its desire to feed;
They pledge a double wrong by marring plant and
seed.

VIII

'Tis longing, longing for some worthless toy,
That builds the mind of man above the brute;
And hopeless longing makes desire and joy
The tender store-room for celestial fruit,
Fulfil the longing and the poisoned root
Of helplessness its many trailers spreads,
To nourish impulse and the cares dilute
With hope and promise, while profusion sheds
Its tinsel show-like tears upon the helpless heads.

XI

The fountain dried! The child to manhood grown,
Must brave the bitter world like bird or beast;
The tender kindness by fond parents shown,
With them has vanished and forever ceased.
The soul is obdurate; the will released
From early discipline the world defies,
And struggles on through meagreness and feast,
To aspire the first but the last to rise
From thraldom's gloomy reign to pleasure's sunny
skies.

X

My lonely wand'rings and my patient search
Brought many wonders to content my sight:
The mountain fastness and the lofty birch

Were never-ending sources of delight;
The strange of taste inflames the appetite,
And foreign shapes we favor or decry;
But agèd sepulchres the past indict
For saving memories for the future's eye,
And Van's archaic tombs much of the past supply.

XI

O mighty conqueror! can this be true?
This humble gravestone which above thy breast,
Proclaims that Xerxes to his greatness grew
Within the shadow of yon mountain crest;
And here he lies, of fame and war the jest—
The worthless plaything of Ambition's purse—
Who purloined virtue while corruption drest
In mazy splendors to parade its curse,
And coax contentment down to drive its carnal hearse.

XII

Can this be he who lashed the stormy waves,
And strove to fetter the tempestuous sea,
For fraying his armament and opening graves
Of foam from which his legions could not flee?
Alas! what change since nations bent the knee
Before this animated lump of clay!
But now the servile throng, the bold and free,
Above the ashes of thy empire stray,
While time as lightly glides among the sad and gay.

XIII

O mighty king! how rude at last the lot
Of great ambitions crumbling in decay!
The gravestone mentions what the scribes forgot,
And triumphs vanish in the long delay;
Though conquest lured thee to the camp and fray,
The Orient trembled at thy dreaded name:

Thy first rebuff taught Greece the destined way
To humble Persia when the spoiler came,
And burned the Aryan's power in Alexander's flame.

XIV

Towering skyward in resplendent power,
The sturdy Ararat's eternal snows
Reflect the mountains in the midnight hour,
Like fairy mansions where Aurora glows.
His rushing rivers wild confusion throws
In narrow valleys where the peasant's skill
Is yet unable to employ the flows,
To leave the vale or irrigate the hill;
So half the soil unused, man eats but half his fill.

XV

Though here the modern world records its birth,
As on yon lofty spire the ark reclined;
And Noah, foremost of the sons of earth,
Tossed by the waves and driven by the wind,
With fostered hopes a happy clime to find,
From summit followed the receding wave,
And made the Van the cradle of mankind,
While waters lowered upon the ghastly cave
Of empires' vast domain as lifeless as a grave.

XVI

And pilgrims seeking everlasting fame,
Search midst the snows for the historic ark;
And still they search, and doubting praise or blame
The worthy mission of the sacred bark.
Though eras vanish, still the shining mark
Of the enthusiast is yonder spire;
And still half the world groping in the dark,
Enjoy the dulcet from the Pagan lyre,
Nor heed the kindling flash of heaven's ennobling
fire.

XVII

The lake in surging turbulence reflects
The glist'ning mantle of the mountain's crown ;
The tawdry rambler, critic like, detects
Where nature erred in fragments tumbled down ;
The silent fisherman with sullen frown
Urges forth his kaik, drops his line and seine,
And twixt the mountains and the steepled town,
Surveys the pictures that the deep retain—
A connoisseur of art on nature's ruffled main.

XVIII

The sombre fortress, overlooking, stands
A gloomy symbol of departed pride,
Obeying the gestures of the Aga's hand,
The giaours and mollahs in compliance stride.
The gloomy citadel assaults defied,
When Rome and Parthian struggled to control ;
But rest has granted what assault denied,
When Bacchus lured them to the flowing bowl,
And placed on Freedom's head Oppression's burning
coal.

XIX

O glorious rule, the native dynasty !
When native soldiers manned yon glistening tower,
And Medes defeated from yon bulwarks flee
To join the Persians in their vanquished hour !
There native freedom in her sacred bower
Defied the ravage of decay and years,
Till the solid phalanx of the Grecian power
Spread like a plague its terrors and its fears,
And jeweled the native home with poverty and tears.

XX

Again I wandered from penurious fare,
O'er snow-capped mountains and the inland seas,

O'er arid slopes which desert winds made bare,
To seek the city of the fair Tabriz.
Through mulberry slopes and freighted orange
trees—

The fairest garden of the eastern world—
Tempered by the Gulf's renovating breeze,
My flaming hopes like desert winds were whirled:
Before were prospects bright, behind the blasts were
hurled.

XXI

How long, O Clio! have these walls withstood
Assaults of men and ravages of time?
Built when creation opened from the bud,
Defying the onslaughts of decay and clime,
Surviving builders, history, and rhyme,
Outliving legends of great Cyrus' fame
Which freed yon battlements from waste and grime,
Enduring shafts from bat'ring ram and flame—
Ambition's blighting curse—to glorify a name!

XXII

Cyrus, like Moses, heralded by dreams
And oracles, by magi prophesied,
Would strip the tyrant of the richest creams,
And raise the poor to plenitude and pride.
But O, what vagaries such dreams deride!
That man from poverty to plenty raised,
Will raise the suf'rer struggling by his side!
When Fortune held him up while Glory praised,
He saw but dazzling dreams that self ambition dazed.

XXIII

Cyrus gained that power when the Lygian king,
Through quaking terror built his funeral pyre;
But proud Ambition will to treasure cling,

And lusty promise, like a prairie fire,
Embraces grass and weeds and rises higher,
Till changing wind and rain distract the blaze,
And lusty promise, lulled by mammon's lyre,
On retainers turns a commanding gaze,
And leads them cheering on through conquest's dreary
maze.

XXIV

For saving Cyrus from Astyages' wrath,
The false Harpagus feasted on his son;
Then Mercy led him o'er the human path,
Where peasants' poverty his pity won;
Yet baffled millions, worshipping the sun,
Ignored the freedom thrust within their grasp,
And suffered gaily till the day was done,
When Asia's tyrant did the greensward clasp,
And left them more oppressed, their fetters prone to
rasp.

XXV

Around the battlement the lurid moat,
As 'round the castle of the knights of old,
Buoyed the faithless caique and the pleasure boat,
While martial music from the kanoun rolled,
Filled every bosom with emotions bold;
And from the battlements doubanas sound
The sentry's heart beats from their dismal hold.
Like Christian countries to the war-god bound,
They exploit man and field to dress some human
hound.

XXVI

The walks since Cambyes upon them trod,
While training heroes for Egyptian graves,
Are still the same, unworn by those who plod

Where once the hero led ten thousand slaves.
And here Darius mustered from their caves
The churlish brutes that baffled Smerdis' reign,
And gave satrapies to ignoble braves
Who filled the coffers for fierce Tamerlane,
From plundered peasants' blood and famished or-
phans' pain.

XXVII

A wretched khatib from a mudir's court,
With regal firmans to the Turkish town,
And sacred mandates from the Sublime Porte,
Employed my skill to serve the royal crown,
To brave adjemi and the imam's frown,
And face the kadin and return her stare.
Like census taker of a western town,
I thrived on insult for my toil and care,
But blessed the Turk for life, for Persia's board was
bare.

XXVIII

Thus serving mankind in a humble sphere,
My toils like conquerors o'er nations spread.
Like man rapacious through his greed and fear,
My servile footsteps through the desert led
For brighter promises of gold and bread;
And still though wandering, nor toil nor rest
Could bid me settle where abundance fed
The silent gleaners, and profusion blest
With golden legacies from nature's rich bequest.

XXIX

I onward traveled through the groves of dates,
Through fields well fitted for the fabled gnomes;
Through fairy gardens where creation waits,
Designs to borrow from the Persian homes,

Till rising o'er the tree tops, glistening domes
And colored minarets distract the eye.
Not Rome's cathedrals nor the Memphis tombs
Such art, color and beauty can supply
As those which in Bagdad in gorgeous splendors lie.

XXX

Those varied colors pleasing to the sight,
Like sordid beauty which attracts the young,
Surround; within her scenes no more invite,
As stifling odors on the nostrils flung,
Derange the judgment which the distance hung
Before our narrow-guaged, bewildered sight.
The public scavengers by hunger stung
Feast on carrion, and a dismal blight
Of melancholy greed makes man all nature fight.

XXXI

'Twas here a regiment from Ghenghis Khan
Gained signal victories for mongol's pride,
While home the terror of the Tartar ran
Across the empire with a fearful stride,
And reared a structure through the country's side,
Which baffled progress and repelled decay.
But that has changed since here the Turks abide
In lasting luxury, while dreams delay
The onward march of thought and joy's unending day.

XXXII

The dreams of Cyrus built like glyptic art
Had glory blazoned on this fairy scene;
But what's feebly fashioned in weakness part,
Nor hide defects nor imperfection screen,
As sickly structure from the plumb-line lean,
And plans o'erdrawn invite an early fall;
So errant fancy sweeps the judgment clean,

And banished reason dooms the dreamer's call,
Till downward sinks the wreck and ruin covers all.

XXXIII

'Tis in this vale the sun's most royal rays,
Like golden fleeces o'er the plains are spread,
And ever here the world's most perfect days
Beam softly down upon the Persian's head.
The sky of Venice is from Bagdad fed,
As here alone is heaven's cerulean blue;
The arid hills to fruitless valleys wed
Contrast the sky with desert's sombre hue
And leave the mind to reckon why such a scene is true.

XXXIV

This ancient city studs a sandy waste;
Its men are like the clime wherein they're reared;
So here is found the mind which acts in haste,
And eyes by rashness and contention bleared;
Nor can they ever be by judgment cleared
Till wasted streams reform this arid plain;
And man with gospels will be ever feared
Till heathen mark him not through spoil or gain,
As he who serves the soul must save the flesh from
pain.

XXXV

So tired of service for exacting lords,
I caught the fever of progressive souls,
And grasped the vantage which the clime affords—
To peddle trinkets through the dells and knolls;
And like the gypsies in their aimless strolls,
Observe the progress of the ruling race.
For man is ruler when his choice of goals
Is independence from a master's grace,
And menials him pursue who sets for all a pace.

XXXVI

At Ispahan the "Forty Columns" rise,
Like mute sentinels silenced by defeats,
Above the tombs where the past shrouded lies ;
The tare blossoms in the untrodden streets
Where guilty glory gathered in retreats,
While sceptred robbers plundered helpless states.
But these are gone ! no more Darius beats
Back the yeradji from his groves of dates !
No longer blazoned kings control the watchful fates.

XXXVII

Those early monarchs all on plunder fared,
And mixed deception with decrees of state,
And faith and virtue were by failure shared,
Till men their tyrants were compelled to hate,
Nor heed no more the arrant scoundrel's strait.
So banished peasants from the rifled soil,
In mountain defiles sought a certain fate
And plied their ruler's art on those who toil,
By tribute for their lives and for their profit spoil.

XXXVIII

The ruler's ethics through his subjects run,
As manly practice imitates the king ;
So crafty morals all that's foreign shun,
And ape the habits of the sceptred thing,
Whose courtly customs to the commons fling
Deceit, Debauch, and Treachery of word.
Each aping rustic to these morsels cling
With high emotions to contentment stirred,
And practice every vice his tainted ears have heard.

XXXIX

Upon this ancient scene where millions stood,
Where fearful tyrants in contention reigned,
The fate of Asia shifted with the mood

Of maid or mistress, while her follies strained
The rigid scruples of the magi, trained
Like seraphs to reveal the hidden springs
Of fate and promise; when her fortunes waned,
The fostered glory of the pompous kings,
Like vultures overgorged, outweighed her trusty
wings.

XL

Persepolis, the "Glory of the East,"
Through ravaged tombs, wrecks and sepulchres,
frowns;
The seat of greatness and where greatness ceased,
The court of splendor and of triumph's crowns,
The ruling spirit of the Persian towns!
'Twas mammon's cradle and 'tis mammon's grave.
But here the spirit which disorder drowns,
No longer rises with desire to save
The favored sons of fame from Time's engulfing wave.

XLI.

The glory drained from tributary states
As slaves and captives, works of hand and brain,
Glittered like the star that the ruling fates
Set above the fields of the vine and grain;
But the triumphs dazzle while the glories wane,
And eyes dilated by the glitter view
The stolen treasures, while the captive's pain
Congeals the sympathies like frost the dew,
Till progress doomed must rest and foul contentions
brew.

XLII

Not Rome's arena nor Olympus' feats
Outshone the orgies of the Xerxes hall,
Nor Roman sculpture nor the Grecian greets
Such bas-reliefs as line each Persian stall:

The anxious soldier rising to the call,
The priest's ablutions and the festal board,
The pompous ruler and the warriors fall,
The wealthy forest and the muses' hoard,
And over all this scene hangs man's chaotic sword.

XLIII

But time has changed this scene, and war and blight
And blasted pleasures in profusion grow,
Till Time's avenging hand dismays the fight,
And heroes fall'n survive to overthrow
The lights of freedom which around them glow,
And forge the fetters to enslave the land
To furnish spirit for their parting show.
Thus Freedom's lips must kiss subversion's hand;
When heroes hold it forth, all on destruction stand.

XLIV

The nation gloated o'er another's pain,
When heroes ravaged with the fire and sword
The weaker people on the Shinar plain,
And from proud Cræsus took his cherished hoard;
It cheered its heroes when their arrows gored
The weak Egyptians without cause of plaint;
And like the gods those murderers adored,
Their sturdy warriors in the sands grew faint
And retribution ruled the soldier and the saint.

XLV

'Tis ever thus—the hero and the fall!
The worship still of Murder's patron saint
Makes man endure the serfdom and the thrall,
With patient pleasure and without complaint.
To save those relics of the old and quaint
For man's approval and for maiden's praise,
Arrest progression and advancement taint
With savage pastimes of the stormy days,
And make our glowing states barbarians to raise.

XLVI

To Susa next my irksome journey bore,
And here the wrecks of man are more complete ;
As Time once favored with the great of yore
The halls and castles of this famous seat :
'Twas here great kings sought comfort in defeat,
And mighty heroes glittered in parade
Between the marble shafts that marked the street,
Ere glory's pageant had begun to fade,
As fade it must from lands whose mercy is the blade.

XLVII

The miles of ruined streets and shattered walls,
The buried temples and the ruined towers,
The broken columns and the spacious halls
Peep from the sandy waste like blighted flowers—
A fierce reminder of the ghastly powers
Of cherished heroes to *perfection* grown—
As all this region in concealment cowers
Before the bubble by approval blown.
So ruin stamped her joy with death's despairing
groan.

XLVIII

All gone? Ah no! there's one can never die,
Among the tombs whose glory still remains ;
For in this crypt where kings and martyrs lie,
A humble name its prestige still retains,
As oft 'tis sounded through the gorgeous fanes
Of Jew and Christian and by both revered ;
'Tis cherished still through God's unending pains
To spread His mercy where His law is reared,
And send His chosen Son where'er His word is
feared.

XLIX

'Tis Daniel's tomb! the ages' overflow
Has crumbled kings and conquerors to dust;

And naught remains of their resplendent show,
Save some distracted tomb or awkward bust
Which thwarted waste and mammon's sordid lust.
But Daniel lives above the shafts of time,
Beyond corrosion and the idle rust
Of nervous quiet, where the active climb
Away from soulless chance, away from venal crime.

L

Kings and heroes complete the passing show
Which fancy pictures on the pensive brain:
The Hebrew kings the Persians overthrow,
Who with obeisance abdicate their reign;
While on the hillside lie the vanquished train
Of proud retainers, perished in defeat;
The kings depart; and dross of worldly gain
Betrays its weakness and its vain deceit,
Where he whose life is false must all his follies meet.

LI

Not so with him who lives for God alone!
Though tribulations thicken with the woes
Of death and disaster, the mercy shown
By heaven's Potentate in wisdom glows,
Till the final Kingdom in completeness grows
Beyond the torpid gild of mortal clay.
Rebuffs of fortune and its cares disclose
The promised peace of the celestial day,
When all the fears of earth will softly fade away.

LII

The mind which fathomed the foreboding dream
That built the statue for the frightened king,
Saw heaven's wisdom in the lightning gleam,
And threatened judgment to the empire cling.
No false illusion could his courage bring

From the sparkling threshold of faith's pure joy,
Nor idol worship, where the lawless fling
Their vain desires, their morbid fears to cloy,
Could mix the Prophet's mind with dross of earth's alloy.

LIII

The walls of Shiraz, passive, cold, and gray,
Bespeak men's confidence in fellow-men;
The gates of iron at the close of day,
Together drawn to shut the people in,
Like beasts of prey within a captive den,
Make weakness possible and nourish fear;
As all the cities like a wild beast's pen,
Implant their wildness in the sons they rear,
And cloud the minds of youth with fogs that never clear.

LIV

The dreaded earthquakes oft this plain have rent,
And thousands perished in their fearful shocks,
Their mad emotions by the furies sent,
Have trembled fiercely o'er those crumbled rocks;
And famous structures wrecked where now the
flocks
Of priest and peasant on the hillside graze.
The rage of elements in blindness mocks,
While unseen violence the temples raze:
But the world's wise are blind when nature fronts
their gaze.

LV

The worldly wise to Allah send their prayers,
And cry for vengeance on the thriving throng,
But plead for pity when their mounting cares
O'erwhelm their courage, and their rivals' wrong
Reaps every effort which to them belong.

Still heaven's prophets in some souls appear,
And Persia ripples in their warning song;
Their sonnets blossom with celestial cheer,
And raise the hearts to joy from life's destroying fear.

LVI

And Persia's prophet was in Hafiz born,
His famished land from darkness to redeem;
And here his fame outlives the buff and scorn
That rise in culture where the vulgar seem
To sup in fellowship the social cream,
And charter rules of sanctity and prayer
To blazon Cyrus and his evil gream.
His words like omens in the heavens glare
Above the braided belts when heroes' trumpets blare.

LVII

Gifted Poet, Philosopher, and Sage,
Thy words are ringing through thy country still!
The spirit wakens of another age,
And coming freedom shall obey thy will!
If man for Liberty can climb the hill
Of Superstition to the stormy peak,
And change the channels which the fountains fill,
To growing verdure from the bare and bleak,
Where rights divine are nursed by toilers worn and
weak.

LVIII

O kings and statesmen! when you battle wrong,
The ages' burdens from the toilers lift,
By placing power where it should belong:
In subjects' ballot place the sacred gift!
Then clouds of impotence by justice rift,
Shall fade and vanish till the glowing sun
In dazzling splendor all the darkness sift;

And groping empires view what man has done,
When in his calloused hands is placed what he has
won.

LIX

Take power from Shahs and tyranny of kings
Which life a martyrdom to subjects makes,
Shall rise like vultures on expansive wings
And seek ignorance; when the reason breaks
The magic seal of autocratic fakes,
Whose right to rule is stamped upon their birth,
And full atonement for transgressions makes;
Then Persia's sun shall shed on Persia's worth
The joys by Allah shared while despots ruled the
earth.

LX

Though power has varied here like shifting scenes
Of pictured canvas on the tragic stage;
And haughty monarchs promise ways and means
To free the judgment from its prison cage;
Yet history still contains the turgid page
Of faithless promise to the trusting slaves,
Whose bartered heritage supports the age
Of kings despotic, while their thralldom waves
Above the martyred throng, above the prophets'
graves.

LXI

O Christ! Give gloomy, servile serfdom one
Of the gifted leaders of Freedom's cause,
Give her benighted sons a Washington,
To lead them safely up to Freedom's laws,
From slavish thralldom and her checkered gauze
Of loosely woven, patriotic pride;
Up from heraldry and pedantic claws
Of bloated vultures whose gigantic stride
Gluts every growing mind of conscience for a guide.

LXII

When eyes in prayer are turned to Hafiz' tomb,
Instead of Mecca, where their prophet lies,
Freedom's offspring will struggle from the womb
Of war and famine to delight the eyes
Of all beholders, with her peaceful rise
From rank oppression to exemption's range.
The fields and forests, streams and balmy skies,
In wakened splendor shall accept the change
Like substance of a dream to mingle and arrange.

LXIII

Through tangled forests and the trackless sands,
My duty led me like a restless wave,
To tempt the profits of the bedouin bands
That scourge the country like the knight and knave;
Too proud to labor and too free to slave
For power or glory for their tyrant lord,
They roam the wilds as fearless and as brave,
As if earth's peace depends upon their horde
To check the sins of men, against their crimes to ward.

LXIV

My trinkets tempted their disastrous queens
Who read the future in the hand and stars,
And deal calamity where fortune leans;
Like heroes rising to engage in wars,
They show the glory but conceal the scars,
Till their forewarnings like the thunder shake
The mind from passion; when temptation jars
The soul's serenity, the senses wake
To hear their warning cries against the judgment
stake.

LXV

Their old philosophers of love and life,
Berate the industries of greed and gain;

As naught can profit by this mortal strife,
 Save selfish pleasure in another's pain.
 If heaven's wisdom should a golden rain
 On thirsty deserts, with its mercy drive,
 No man could profit though he pile the plain
 With golden globules ; self-defence must strive
 Against the wiles of man, above his needs to thrive.

LXVI

The mental comfort which they boldly preach,
 The body's wants they aim to satisfy,
 Are sacred doctrines which the sages teach,
 In shaping wisdom for posterity :
 For lands and slaves a weighty burden lie
 Upon the famished and ignoble minds,
 And sap the fountains of devotion dry,
 Where care to plenty her ambition binds,
 And souls inured to sin in selfish sorrow grinds.

LXVII

'Tis Life's enjoyment—sinlessness, not ease—
 No want of luxury nor thirst for gold,
 That trusts in nature like the growing trees,
 For food and sunshine, shelter from the cold.
 And nature prospers this nomadic fold,
 As all the virtues of the gods they keep ;
 Their hope is less of mercenary mould
 Than Islam's saints whose holy imams reap
 The charities and tithes, while helpless orphans weep.

LXVIII

Through nomad bands to Hamadan I came,
 And saw the glory of Ecbatana's shade,
 Where once were seen the gorgeous crests of fame,
 And dazzling flashes of the gory blade
 Through sacred flesh, as heroes plied their trade
 A vaulted moment or a smile to gain.

Their names have vanished as such fame must fade
From the future's eye; and the guilty stain
Must always fresher grow when we behold this plain.

LXIX

The modern city upon ruin rests,
Nor stoops to seek what treasures lie below;
As time and ravage have securely drest
The ancient city from voluptuous show,
With mounds of earth to quench her lustrous glow;
And dark oblivion for the brooding years
Would fain forget her final overthrow,
And seal the sympathy and trifling tears
Against a wrong avenged by man's absolving peers.

LXX

Amid the ruin a tomb attracts the gaze,
As Esther's name is graven on the stone:
'Tis Elam's queen beneath the wreck and ~~razed~~
Of age and sword, that rises to bemoan
The sickly kingdoms o'er her empire grown.
And faith in God to answer earnest prayer
Has also vanished since her trust was sown;
So why should she be lost when sinners dare
The sights her eyes forbade and perish everywhere.

LXXI

Mordecai's sacred name the next tomb bears,
Unearthed from ages of destructive waste;
Their tombs together like their toils and prayers,
Defy eternity's remorseless haste,
With less destruction than the golden-cased
Sarcophagi of kings whose gilded graves
Have long been ravaged and the gild erased,
Or stowed with jewels in the robbers' caves,
To deck some gypsy queen or fetter glory's slaves.

LXXII

In vain the eye pursues the withered tombs
And seeks o'er fallen slabs her rival's name:
'Tis gone at Susa, and the empty rooms
Of Hamadan no Vashti does proclaim.
Her rude divorce but sinks her tyrant's shame!
But her successor placed above the throne
The golden promise of her God's first claim,
And there it glittered and in splendor shone
Till Esther's short career from court and caste had
 flown.

LXXIII

But why from Susa is she buried here,
And why her cousin from his sacred soil?
Her lusty king! where rests his royal bier,
And why not with her whom he raised from toil,
His plot, promise, and treachery to foil?
'Tis lost! no longer rings his frightful name
From Indus' waters to the Red Sea's roil!
For he has vanished like a burnt-out flame,
And from the millions dead these two triumphant
 came.

LXXIV

To view the past of this distracted scene,
I closed my eyes and dwelt in raptured gaze
On panoramas of the heart and spleen,
Passing like visions the horizon's haze,
Rising in grandeur to the parting ways
Where blood fraternal in despair was spilt;
And jealous factions in their frantic craze
Drove Envy's poniard to the gory hilt,
To sack the sacred town their fellow-men had built.

LXXV

The seven walls in all their grandeur rose:
The highest, broadest, grandest, gilt with gold,
The next in regular gradation shows

Its shining silver in the sunshine rolled,
To glare and glitter in the starry cold;
And next the orange frowning and severe,
Where faithful sentinels their passwords told,
And challenged vagrants whose vocation near
Provoked excitement and awakened latent fear.

LXXVI

The bue, the scarlet, black, and last, the white,
In serried vigor towered against the sky;
As if invaders' onslaughts to invite,
And strength of kings and countries to defy.
But wisdom weakens when our hopes rely
On temporal things to perpetuate
Our selfish follies—dreams that seldom die.
And morbid structures by a blast of fate,
Sink a helpless ruin some jealous foe to sate.

LXXVII

A mammoth structure in the city rose,
Towering skyward above the golden wall;
The Present's promise against want and woes,
Where prayers were offered at the magi's call,
To save the city from the threatened fall
Which Hebrew prophets from their visions spun;
And here assembled in the spacious hall
The armored warriors from the banquet's fun,
To worship at the shrine—the Temple of the Sun.

LXXVIII

And here the archives of the East were kept,
The tracts of Cyrus and Darius' scrolls;
And here the Medes in full contentment slept
While War his chariots in confusion rolls
Around the walls and through the wooded knolls;
And here the Parthian mused in royal pride
On life's enjoyment unalloyed with souls;

And here the courage of the East was tried
To check the Greek's advance and Alexander's stride.

LXXIX

The vision passed I ope'd my eyes to see
The present structures on the wrecks of age.
What marked surprises through the reason flee,
When contrast offers her substantial page
To prove the wisdom of the ancient sage
Who saw the shadows of impending woe,
Darken the banquet and forebodings wage!
But callous man invites the threatened blow,
Nor yields to fate's decree till doom has laid him low.

LXXX

But age has left no wrinkles on the face
Of this oft-ravaged and demolished plain,
Where heroes thundered to destroy a race,
Or trifling trophies of their scourge to gain.
Those fairy fields once numbered thousands slain,
When races battled to decide control;
The termination of a tyrant's reign,
Oft raised another of a fiercer soul,
To wreck the neighboring states or devastate the
whole.

LXXXI

What hatred sparkled in the foemen's eyes,
While angry foam was gathered on their lips!
How each contended to convey the prize
To cheering kinsmen, and sustain the grips
Of feeble monarchs over lands and ships
Of humbled rivals who beneath the yoke
Of the oppressor, each advancement trips!
How foreign products in the markets choke
The native trade and deal the state a blighting stroke!

LXXXII

What ages passed since those beneath the clay,
With pulse and passion struggled to attain
The grand supremacy of human sway!
What lasting trophies did their armies gain,
When plunder quickened their invading train,
And blazing cities their departure showed!
What deathless glory from this gory plain,
Where blood like water in profusion flowed
To crown some hero king or spread a tyrant's code!

LXXXIII

There is no tablet to proclaim their fate,
No Zend-Avesta to decipher tombs;
Their hieroglyphics baffle to translate
The pampered scholars from vain Learning's looms.
The part we know intensifies the glooms
That distance fastens o'er this far abyss,
As Scripture gathered but the fairest blooms
To guide posterity to sainted bliss;
Where only good survives, the evil lies amiss.

LXXXIV

'Tis Persia's history—on ruin built,—
On Persia's ruin and Bactrian blood!
Ruin succeeds to ruin, tilt to tilt,
And each advance arrested in the bud,
Denies development Progression's flood;
And each succession while her systems last,
Must chew the same confused ancestral cud,
Till Doom announces with a trumpet-blast,
That love, and life, and earth—our vain desires—are
past.

LXXXV

And yet of prophets! she hath many borne,
But heeded not their words of praise or blame;

Their timely prophecies by edicts shorn,
Were heard distorted when the evils came.
But growing research lit the prophet's flame,
And kept it burning like a taper tall,
Till few commenced to seek Jehovah's claim,
And read His mission and to heed his call,
And shed redeeming light o'er custom's murky pall.

LXXXVI

But tyrants spied disaster in the light,
And hurled their thunders at inquiring minds.
Thus fashion welcomed the quiescent blight
That obscures progress and promotion blinds;
And bigoted man in the old rut grinds
Like galley-slave of the Empire's day
Content to live where ancient custom winds
Its blasted visions bloated by decay,
Rather than seek the light which time-worn habits flay.

LXXXVII

As forest leaves are glossy toward the sun
And soft and porous in their sheltered part,
My mind was filed 'gainst Persian trophies won,
But ever open to my pleading heart,
Since pierced by Cupid's fascinating dart.
And soft emotions creeping through my soul,
Preserved my conscience from temptation's mart,
My habits safely from the ruddy bowl
That strands the lusty shekh on satan's tempting shoal.

LXXXVIII

So Teheran's lusty, voluptuous life
Held no allurements save the ancient pile—
The wrecks of Rei—rising from the strife
Of Mede and Persian like a pristine style.
The sickly triumphs and cajoling smile
Of Europe's consuls and their showy wives,

Degrade the state and fellowship beguile.
Each social leader like the vulture strives
To feast on carnal gain by humbling rivals' lives.

LXXXIX

'Tis Europe's lesson that the East should learn,
And Europe's Consuls should its teachers be.
Let freedom's watch-fires in their bosoms burn,
And duty dissipate their sordid glee;
Then will suspicion from the Orient flee,
And lands benighted by the tyrant's reign,
Shall rise and bless the faith that made them free,
And welcome mankind to the fertile plain
Where first the ruling race wore serfdom's galling
chain.

XC

And wears it still save in the Western world
Where roaming exiles the untamed subdued,
And drank of wisdom with their banners furled,
Exalted dignities of solitude.
The Mind expands when bigotry and feud—
The chief corollaries of satan's power—
Are stript of bias by the wild and rude,
And moulded fairly in the lonely bower
Where ancient forests tame the galling spleen and
sour.

XCI

And here I felt my competence acquired!
The hawker's duty with the Persian ceased;
With thoughts of love my anxious soul was fired,
And duty found me from my cares released.
With glowing pleasure I forsook the East,
To seek the comforts of the Zagros hills,
Where fair Alixis would prepare the feast
Of home and welcome from the joy that fills
The heart to overflow, the eyes to trickling rills.

XCII

The dreams of love when distance binds the hearts,
Are joys Elysian from the throne of Grace;
The suffered bondage from the mind departs,
And pleasure glimmers in the dreamer's face.
What odds to him, how long or hard the race,
From prattling infant to the open grave!
Each failure strengthens to a swifter pace
The loving heart, the dutiful and brave,
To rise above defeat, above Time's stormy wave.

XCIII

My glitt'ring coins I counted with delight,
While gliding swiftly o'er the Caspian Sea;
And prayed for joy when land was lost from sight,
As distance shortened between her and me.
How sweet the promise when the heart is free
From trial and trouble and the pressing care,
To share the pleasure of unending glee
With one so faithful, generous, and fair,
And like Cordelia's knight her urgent burdens bear!

XCIV

The walls of Baku fortified and fierce,
Like angels rising from the froward foam,
Seemed crowned with splendor where her turrets
 pierce
The dying flicker of the parting gloam,
Beauty gilded each minaret and dome
With all the glories of the fading day,
And every object toward my native home
Was drest in beauty, while the grand display
Of happy visions rose to drive all doubts away.

XCV

Along the Cyrus to its mountain source,
Above the wrecks of many ancient fanes,

I traveled swiftly on my homeward course,
Nor stopped to seek among the past's remains
For freaks of fancy or ambition's pains ;
But fled like one pursued to reach my goal,
Nor saw the rifled wrecks on Georgia's plains
Where Turk and Russian struggled for control,
And stript the peaceful poor for king's exacting toll.

XCVI

How long, great God! must this neglected plain
Be rent by warring hosts and thirsty steel?
How long till men Thy proffered wisdom gain,
And earnest pity for the fallen feel?
How long till knowledge lifts the pressing heel
Of Superstition from the peasant's neck?
Or must they on this everlasting wheel,
Like Ixion without a hand to check,
Gyrate through slavish toil and sink a broken wreck?

XCVII

'Tis Mercy's mission to promote the man,
And lift the world's burden from his back ;
But man unlettered spurns a novel plan,
And staggers forward till his sinews crack,
Blinded by distrust, cumbered by his pack.
He scorns the science that unravels fear,
And travels blindly o'er his beaten track,
Training his children like the mountain deer,
To follow instinct's sway through sullen ways and
drear.

XCVIII

'Tis here the missionary's charge is vain,
Till through his efforts they are taught to grow
Above the drudgery of want and pain.
Forget the soul till life is seen to glow

Like crystal waters in their onward flow ;
 And bodies bent by heritage and toil,
 Assume the dignity of serfdom's foe !
 Then will the inner life unwind its coil,
 And shape the future for the lords of serf and soil.

XCIX

Across the Caucasus to Trebizond—
 The great emporium of Europe's trade—
 Where Jew and Christian barter, sell and bond
 The crops of continents. And garments made
 In Europe's workshops are together laid
 With rugs from Persia ; and the Syrian wine
 Bottled and barreled choke the streets, and shade
 The merchant's windows, while the sabres shine
 Like Trade's commanding god along the ample line.

C

The motley crowd that throngs the thoroughfares,
 All tongues of Asia and her kin portrays ;
 The proffered choice of husbandry and wares
 Would please the cynics of the ancient days ;
 The carts and caravans from divers ways,
 Transcendent sermons in their structure preach ;
 As no advancement in the cumbrous maze
 Of weighty texture can their builders reach,
 Till Progress shows its face and Pity deigns to teach.

CI

Like the dead rivers on the desert's breast,
 That surge and tumble as if seaward bound,
 But narrows humbly as if inward prest,
 And pour their torrents in the thirsty ground,
 Are fond emotions in the bosom found,
 Rising in success, encompassing hate,
 Crushing obstacles, and finally crowned

By disappointment, ere the pearly gate
Of mortal's vain desires is open to our fate.

CII

So fled misgivings through my anxious brain,
As through Erzerum I pursued my way;
My calm reflections had begun to wane
And evil omens through my visions stray.
The stifled ruins which before me lay,
My suspense increased as I gazed around;
And all the portents of the fierce dismay
That rules the body when the life is bound
To serve some lord of earth were in my fancies found.

CIII

Alixis' image stamped upon my mind,
Onward led me despite my boding fears;
The fetid city I soon left behind,
Nor stopped to meditate the rage of years—
The captors' triumphs and the captives' tears.
Another city built upon a wreck,
To hold my fancy while my footstep nears
The distant hills which, like a verdant speck,
Seemed all the scattered vales with emerald hues to
deck!

CIV

How dear the hills where fair Alixis lives,
How fair the valleys and the tangled groves!
'Tis life's elixir that the pasture gives,
While o'er the greensward my Alixis roves
To guard her cattle from the mountain droves
Of peasants' chattels browsing on the grass.
Those humble hovels are the fairest coves,
To shelter beauty in a mountain lass,
And she shall share my joy ere one more day shall
pass.

CV

But ah! what plague has seized the Resin's dell;
Why weltering ashes where the hovels stood?
Why fates molest this solitary cell
Where each sought happiness in doing good!
The vale is empty as the lonely wood,
Nor goat nor cattle graze upon the plain;
'Tis wild as sad reflection's frenzied mood,
And all the vale is wilderness again;
The owl and vampire bat are all that now remain.

CHAPTER III

I

'Tis fate's decree that true Love's stormy road
Besets the traveler and derides his heart
With pangs remorseless from vexation's goad,
To tempt, to baffle, and at last to part,
Then spread the pinions for another start
While disappointment in subjection broods ;
Or hurl in anger against Cupid's dart,
The moral confidence in angels' moods
Are Love's exciting tests in all its latitudes.

II

Against the fates the struggling lover toils,
Nor brooks the insolence of wealth or fame ;
While round his heart the prickly dodder coils,
The trustful triumph animates his frame ;
Till doubt and danger reassert their claim :
To drive him on through melancholy veins,
And feed his passion with the frenzied flame
Of fretful anguish, and the frightful train
Of Envy's green-eyed imps which mount his mind to
reign.

III

The choler planted by reflection's choice,
Is weakly nourished in the jealous brain ;
As absence hinders the repining voice
From dealing doubt or fixing reckless pain.
Though oft creations of the heart are slain
By diffidence or disregard of mind,
And strong attachments from the spirits wane
Like sickly vapors on a thirsty wind,
But True Love never doubts, nor dreams the jealous
kind.

IV

The love Alixis bore was virtue's flame,
Inspired by heaven, by devotion fed;
Her meek affection shared no earthly claim,
No sordid beauty in her soul was wed;
As every passion of the dust was dead
To all allurements of the morbid world.
No rustic virtue from the hills had fled,
As each was guarded, while Temptation hurled
His shining darts of vice where social custom whirled.

V

But beauty's safety in Armenia lies
Where fades the blossom from the glowing cheek,
In darkness hidden from the Moslem's eyes,
Where plants grow puny, colorless, and weak;
Or in the mountains where the winds are bleak,
And blighting tempests scour the hills with frost,
Where mountain timbers in the tumult creak,
And all the weakness of the flesh is lost.
Thus terror gilds it proof, but at a fearful cost.

VI

Alixis shared the sorrow of her race;
In mountain fastness she was deemed secure.
A queenly figure and a comely face
Must seek seclusion and a life demure,
If peace and safety would her lot insure,
Against a custom from the gloomy past,
Which throws a thralldom o'er the just and pure,
And spreads its carnage on a scale more vast
Than any war or plague by gods or tyrants cast.

VII

A learned Kadi to the Zagros came,
To seek retirement from a life of care;
To search the mountains for the highland game,

And heal his gouty frame with rugged fare,
Where nothing kindles like the bracing air,
The famished frame of sedentary life;
And strips the florid mask of passion bare
From fever's hectic flush and ailments rife
With vexing maladies provoking mental strife.

VIII

His wand'rings brought him to the Resin's dell,
Where lowly hovels of the humble poor,
In the highland glade and the forest cell,
Fretted the wayside and studded the moor,
In native innocence supposed secure,
Where fair Alixis toiled for daily bread,
Nor feared the presence of the foeman's tour;
As all attractions from the vale were fled
Save wrecks of former times and mountain maids un-
wed.

IX

When fair Alixis met his searching eye,
The school of beauties in his harem waned;
He heaved a pressing, self-indulgent sigh,
And toward her father's hovel straightway strained,
With hopes triumphant, as the conquests gained
In Moslem centres are with pleasure given.
As slaves are tutored and for freedom trained
In Turkish harems, while their masters driven
To royal favors' feet seek wives of virtue riven.

X

Like an anxious soul before heaven's Throne,
Beholding majesty with mortal dread,
Trembling from terror of the vast unknown,
And viewing the aspect of her fancies dead,
Alixis hearkened what the Kadi said;
While fast the color from her fading cheek,
With dire forebodings from her features sped,

XIV

A blazing torch to domiciles applied,
While cracking carbines the escaping felled;
And next the valley on the Resin's side,
To speed destruction was by zaptiehs shelled;
And every cabin where the natives dwelled
Was ruined and ravaged by this heartless troop.
The dead were buried like their dogs unknelled;
In shallow trenches the defending group,
And o'er their graves profaned, their foes would dance
and whoop.

XV

Poor Alixis her father's fall beheld,
Likewise her brothers in the deadly blaze.
The frightened mother to her daughter held,
Till pierced by bayonets, the deathly glaze
Of life's departure stole across her gaze;
Then down she sank—no more the human prey
Of fiendish tyrants whose intrusion preys
On helpless innocents that cross their way,
And robs the star of hope of every glowing ray.

XVI

She strove to kiss her dying mother's lips,
But cruel captains thrust themselves between,
And forced her onward to the desert ships—
The sleepy camels muscular and lean—
Plying 'twixt Mosul and the Lydian green,
The drowsy traffic of the Indian trade,
Where angry simooms swept the desert clean,
And awed the prestige of the Moslem blade,
There went the caravan, the zaptiehs, and the maid.

XVII

She begged for mercy and for death she prayed,
While on she journeyed o'er the trackless waste;

But Moslem pity for a Christian maid
Who honors virtue and is true and chaste,
Is like the tiger's which a fawn has chased
From native heather to his jungle lair.
What cries for mercy while his claws are braced
In the mangled flesh, can induce him there
To quit his tempting feast and ease the fawn's despair!

XVIII

What prayers can reach the mercenary Turk
Who serves a master to advancement blind,
Whose unkept pledges to the nations work
The baneful practice of the aping kind!
This mimicry of art will grow in mind
And upright subjects to the brute degrade,
Unless through union of the powers refined,
The Turk is tutored and his system made
To mend his ancient laws and break his ready blade.

XIX

Can mercy issue from the savage brain,
Or justice blossom from the empty mould?
Can reason prosper where instinct has lain
Through thriftless ages—centuries untold—
And rural virtues are like chattels sold?
'Tis not the practice of progressive thought;
But human vampires in their greed for gold,
That save the customs that the past had wrought,
And bann advancing minds that moral wisdom sought.

XX

'Twas like the waking from a frightful dream
Where visions picture an alarming state,
And all the shafts of misanthropy gleam
In lurid rays of universal hate,
That 'roused Alixis to her direful fate,
To find how true the magic of the mind

Had pictured Resin razed and desolate.
How proud the Kadi and insolently kind,
He strode before the couch where weeping she re-
clined!

XXI

How rude the waking in the harem cell,
With women dwarfed in body, mind, and soul!
How keen the tortures of this brutal hell,
For one accustomed to a woodland knoll!
The artful dainties and the honied roll
Which smooth the flesh and tempt the appetites,
The Cyrian fruits and the ruddy bowl—
The luring demons of the lusty nights—
Could not entice her eyes to view surrounding sights.

XXII

She shrank in terror from the Kadi's hands,
As from a serpent coiled upon her breast,
And spurned the kalfa and the noisy bands
Of pouting slaves who with the hanum prest
Among the members their commanding crest.
No fair bakshish nor ikon's tempting hue
Could catch her mind her troubled soul to rest;
As every longing from her spirit flew,
When Moslem's gory hands her draughts of life did
brew.

XXIII

The yashmak settled lightly on her brow,
While raging tempests on her reason preyed;
She seldom recognized the hanum's bow,
Nor to the Kadi the temena made;
As reason's tenement in pain arrayed,
Abandoned judgment and the chosen thought,
Forsaken, rambled like a moving shade,
When errant breezes in the tree-tops caught
The windward branches' leaves and fleeting shadows
wrought.

XXIV

Her rambling spirit strolled between extremes :
The idle pleasures of her mountain home
Tripped lightly from her tongue, and then the
 themes
Of petty troubles like the settling gloam
Of lasting shade would o'er her features roam ;
All the lights and clouds of her tender years,
Passed o'er her memory like the crown of foam
On the breaker's crest ; her resplendent tears
Jeweled her stormy path with gems like childhood's
 fears.

XXV

Her mother's counsel and the tender words
Of hope and promise wandered through her mind,
As lightly buoyant as the summer birds
Can calm enjoyment in the tree-tops find ;
Her sire's attention to the daily grind
Of life's fulfilment, and his anxious care
To train his daughter dutiful and kind,
Rang through the harem, till the startled air
Of frenzy's fevered blood drove kalfas to despair.

XXVI

She called her brothers in endearing tones,
As if they listened to her eager call,
And mixed their praises with her tragic moans,
To chide the echoes of the spacious hall,
From scarlet curtains to the frescoed wall.
Then with her fingers pressed against her lip,
That no expression from her voice should fall
To flippant meddlers that exactness strip,
From love's enchanting theme to glut the gossip's ship.

XXVII

She whispered fondness in her lover's ear
With soft admonishment for tardy traits,

And mentioned sweetly the advancing year
That brought them nearer to the nuptial gates—
The most desired of all the anxious states
For heedless maidens who perceive with dread,
The luckless fortunes and forsaken straits
Of Lot's votary who remains unwed,
To burn the fuel of chance till silver crowns her head.

XXVIII

The fabled narratives she counted o'er,
With repetitions as her wand'ring brain
Created not, but stammered from the lore
Of treasured legacies and legends vain,
The well-remembered tales of Ninus' plain,
Of love and romance, charity and joy,
By Beauty's poets in a pleasant strain,
With naught of sophistry or doubt's alloy,
But every graceful art the nymphs of peace employ.

XXIX

Yet oft recurring to her lover's name,
The trusted promises and secrets kept,
She fanned aloft the love-inspiring flame
That lit the chamber where the angels slept,
Or burst in music where the fairies stept
From Calm's retirement to the striding gale.
Then altered by her changeful mood she wept
O'er trifling wrong and melancholy tale,
And to her lover's trust she sang this simple wail:

I

Where sands are piling rift on rift,
Upon the Persian plains,
My true love wanders o'er the drift
In search of golden gains;
But when the autumn's haze is spread
Like gauze o'er earth and sun,

He'll then return with manly tread,
With luring trophies won.

2

And while the autumn's sun shines bright
O'er diamonds in the dew,
Before the hoar frost strips the night
Of songsters frail and few;
With loving heart and willing hands,
With thoughts by Cupid fed,
We'll build a cot near Khor-su's strands
And sacredly be wed.

3

But oh! what blighting doubts assail!
What fancy lures the brain!
Why storms of mind when calms prevail,
Like sunny skies with rain!
And why're my fairest hopes beset
With doubts of truthful mien,
While blooms of joy with dews are wet
And every plant is green?

4

Comes not my lover to my side,
Nor answers to my call;
My cries are echoed far and wide,
Like shouts against a wall!
Yet comes there not a word to me
Of troth or plighted vows,
But love engulfs me like a sea,
And bathes my aching brows.

5

My lover's true! my lover's true!
He will to me return.
Though tempting fate his pathway strew

With coins from Midas' urn;
The lusts of life, the love of chance,
The pride of fame or war
Can't turn his step nor guide his lance
To serve a worldly star.

6

Shines not the sun on such a mind
On other form than his;
The truest heart of human kind
Beneath his mantle is.
For me alone his pulses beat,
For me he toils and strives
Through Resin's snow and Persia's heat
And rambling gypsies' hives.

7

Speak not to me a word of doubt,
Sing not another's praise!
He's not the kind to whine or pout
O'er life's disastrous days;
The shards of time, the thorns and cares
That strip of peace the weak,
May leave their marks and festering tears,
But ruffle not his cheek.

8

He drank the dregs of human woe,
Ere youth his brow had turned;
The vain desire of man for show
His gleaning wisdom learned;
And pity for the fallen feels,
Though crime and greed the cause;
His helping hand new strength reveals
In breaking custom's laws.

9

For every human soul he prays,
The erring and the just,
The foe whose curses blast his days
And grind him to the dust;
The friends whose helping hands have raised
Erect his broken form,
Are in his tender counsel praised
With ardent suit and warm.

10

'Twas life's sad lot—his early years—
And ne'er from trouble free,
He learned the love of want and tears,
The curse of sordid glee;
But heaven's justice seldom sends
A blasted life of woe
To those who strive to make amends
For error's languid flow.

11

Sad was the morn, the noon more fair,
And bright the evening ray;
Yet no life crowded care on care,
Can heaven and earth obey;
His thorny road must now be past,
More free he moves along;
His youthful hope must come at last
With music, love, and song.

12

Ere winter spreads his mantling fold
Of sparkling sheen and white,
And round the Zagros hills the cold
Is blown with sting and bite,
He will to me with love return
With wealth and tender care;

And oh! for him all else I'll spurn,
Nor seek from earth a share.

XXX

The heart is broken by the power and strain
Of passion's tempest, when emotions press
The teeming burdens of a jaded brain
Against affections that devotion bless,
To grow in silence; but beneath the stress
And bustle of the tumult's grinding course,
To burst like tissues of a tawdry dress
Which serves to prison some expanding force
That strives against its guard and mounts above its
source.

XXXI

'Tis boding silence brooding over grief,
That deeply thinks and stems the flood of tears,
And seeks in solitudes for woe's relief,
Forgetting life and love and urgent fears,
Till putrid malady its bastion rears
To wreck the temple of the soul's abode.
But suffer sorrow empty on her biers
The surging pressure of her weighty load,
And soon the joys resume where streams of sadness
flowed.

XXXII

So fair Alixis freed her rambling mind,
Among the troubles of her life to dwell,
And suffer torture from the rueful grind
Of kindled madness burning like a hell,
The brawny fibre and the nervous cell;
Until the mischies of the threatened stroke
Like dire disaster on her senses fell;
And through her ravings, higher judgment spoke
That fate's decree had struck—her loving heart was
broke,

XXXIII

The close attention of the hanum's guard
With gentle hands her longings satisfied,
And wept in sympathy when no reward
Of strength returning, filled their hearts with pride;
But raging fever all her freshness dried,
And left her bosom like a trembling wall
That fire had ravaged, and the winds denied
Their crushing vigor to insure its fall;
Thus tremblingly it stands till waste devours it all.

XXXIV

The burning fever every charm consumed;
The portly bosom shriveled on the bones;
The cheeks that dimpled where the roses bloomed,
Were shrunk and ghastly from the racking groans;
The silvery voice, lost in harsher tones,
No longer rippled like a playful stream;
But spent its measure sounding morbid moans,
Or shrieking fiercely a distempered dream;
Each pang brought forth a moan, and every fear a
scream.

XXV

The eyes where calmness in contentment dwelt,
Were wildly roving or in fervent glare
Congealed the passions where distraction felt
The icy pinions of her frigid stare,
Steal through the system like a martyr's prayer.
The lustrous sparkle of her soul was fled,
And glaze was fastened to portray despair
In every glance her rising anguish bred,
To shrink from every form and start at every tread.

XXXVI

The ruby lips their glowing fulness lost,
And parched and shriveled wore a darksome blue;

The face was furrowed where the fever tossed,
And shaded swarthy where its lightnings flew;
The brows gleamed ghastly o'er the pallid hue
Of sunken features, while the pearly teeth,
Unmarked by fever, wore the morning dew,
And shone like lustrous jewels underneath
The mantle of decay that masked her like a sheath.

XXXVII

Like a candle's blaze harassed by the wind,
It fiercely flickers while the calm prevails,
And reigns in darkness when the zephyrs blind
Its lusty glimmer with their feeblest gales,
But rises madly when the tempest rails:
Jumping from the wick, grasping it again,
And snapping fiercely as each effort fails;
To live or die in triumph over pain,
Seems in the battling light the only hope to gain.

XXXVIII

So strove Alixis struggling like the blaze,
Sometimes in vigor, sometimes in despair,
Till came at length the parting of the ways
Where fever fastens and resists repair,
Or leaves defeated by sagacious care.
Her burning fever had assumed the worst,
And ebbing life was clinging to a prayer—
The last of knowledge but of life the first,
To trust a gracious God when earthly temples burst.

XXXIX

The haughty Kadi thwarted in desire,
In tense compassion for the sufferer showed,
And strove to quench the slow-destroying fire
That marred the cheek where erstwhile beauty
glowed.
His barber bled her while the hot blood flowed,

To drain the fever from her wasting form,
With hopes that vigor from its strong abode,
Would keep the frail impoverished body warm,
While life was on the scales and strength was in the
storm.

XL

His home palatial in a Smyrnian grove,
Where ancient Smyrna in her splendor shone,
Ere war and commerce from the hillside drove
The healthy peasants to the sickly tone
Of swamp and moorland, where the rivers groan
With tide and traffic from some distant shore;
Was in confusion by her illness thrown;
And every luxury of stall and store,
Was spread with tempting show her fading eyes be-
fore.

XLI

His morning rambles through his groves and flow-
ers,
No satisfaction nor contentment brought;
His mind was fastened through his leisure hours,
To disappointment's less attractive thought—
Purchased by desire yet too dearly bought.
For every breath his struggling sufferer drew,
Pressed on his growing conscience gravely fraught;
Till in his bosom the suspicion grew
That fate's defending arm her health and beauty slew.

XLII

His nourished fancy kindled like a dream,
And flung its pinions o'er his judgment seat—
Where prescribed reason feasted on the cream,
And banished talent had but curd to eat.
But thoughtful longing found a safe retreat
To plant the seeds of mercy in his soul.

As longing fosters Vanity's defeat,
By driving Passion from the mind's control,
So love supports the heart when justice is the goal.

XLIII

Thus goaded by the hell of constant fear—
Fear of his own misgivings coming true—
He found compassion, and a ready tear
For human sorrow in his bearing grew.
The sordid passions from his spirit flew,
And lusty greed was banished from his thought,
Till in his conscience flashed a light anew,
Anent the auguries by precept taught—
That perfect life is ne'er with carnal pleasure fraught.

XLIV

But man is human and his moral plain
Is shifted by the demon of desire,
As freely turning as the weather-vane
Directs its arrow from a lofty spire,
Against the current of the wind or fire;
His lighter tendencies oft guidance find
To sway his judgment when the hosts conspire
Against his reason and dethrone his mind;
But calm reflection rules when troubles darkly blind.

XLV

Thus struggling 'gainst the freedom of his soul,
He sought retirement for his waxing brain,
Among his fig-trees and the cedar knoll
That skirt the valley of old Smyrna's plain.
He longed for freedom from the mental strain
That banished comfort from his thoughts and
dreams,
And choked his pleasure with the cries of pain,
The crowding terrors and the frightful screams
That flooded all his cares with sorrow's turgid
streams,

XLVI

Since Resin's slaughter branded him as cause,
His growing conscience haunted every sigh;
And in his breast for safe, protecting laws,
The gleam of sympathy was rising high.
The conquest worthless as a fountain dry,
Gave grief for pleasure, misery for gain,
Till from his burden he would safely fly
For mental comfort to relieve the strain,
If life's impatient cup could such a drop contain.

XLVII

He sought the cave where Homer trilled his lays—
The gloomy cave where sightless eyes once found
The kindled spirit of the stormy days,
And love unswerving, while the tempter frowned
From every idol that his visions crowned,
To shake devotion from her golden throne.
But sightless eyes the matchless meshes wound,
That glitter widely like a halo blown
From Jove's celestial brow to light this mortal zone.

XLVIII

The lonely grotto—dismal but sublime,
Sublime in history and ancient fame—
Inspired him not as walls of shale and lime
Attract the vision by reflected flame,
Where golden fancies to the sightless came.
The thoughts of virtue crowding on his brain,
Of brave Ulysses and his upright dame,
Then Paris' treason and the fearful strain,
Spread visions o'er his mind of Priam's despairing
reign.

XLIX

The regal chamber where a king was born,
Attracts attention if the royal child

Displays the traits that genius might adorn:
Of saintly wisdom, manners calm and mild,
Evolved from ancestors, the warring wild.
Such startling changes from the sire to son,
Are era builders, while the king is styled
An epoch maker for the duties done,
Aside from courtly rules where victories are won.

L

But in this Grotto Odyssey was born—
Spark of the flame immortal from the throne
Of eternal Jove—to herald the morn
Of life's fulfilment, from the noisy tone
That Conflict's system had profusely thrown
Among the nations to arrest control,
And cherish darkness; till the meteor shone
Through sightless orbs, on a luminous soul;
Then came the flights of mind portraying the human
goal.

LI

He loved the solitude of Homer's cave,
And tempted echoes from the flinty walls,
To fling their message to the breaking wave
That throbbed beneath him where the sad sea calls,
In mournful cadence as the water falls
With groans like human from the rocky shore.
The wave-beat's echo through the granite halls
Of nature's cavern, with a mingled store
Of heaven's entrancing charms that thrilled the bard
of yore.

LII

Here he faltered while solitude embraced
The magic fountains of his worried mind,
And led him captive through the languid waste
Of sensual pleasure—life's unending grind—

1 To arid fields where gloomy spectres blind
The fevered vision with the morbid wrong
Or self-abasement, and the tighter bind
The soaring pinions with the passions strong,
That virtue's bower defile, while error guides the
throng.

LIII

Poor fool! revolting at his mirrored past,
From sad reflections to the lawn he turned,
Untaught by nature that his future's caste
Must from the annals of his past be learned.
Despite the filling of his mind he yearned
For higher life, without the thorny cloak;
But retrospection of his past be spurned,
While pangs of conscience and of duty woke;
Then truant fancy came redeeming thoughts to choke.

LIV

Poor fool! 'twas nature's voice in solitude,
That woke contrition in his aching breast;
And heaven's penance in his thoughts imbrued,
That wrecked his scruples and destroyed his rest;
'Twas virtue's ransom for the soul distressed,
That offered freedom to his spirit's range.
But folly lured him to adore its crest,
And suffer not the obloquy of change,
Lest power forsake his hand and loyal friends es-
trange.

LV

The fickle prestige of his morbid power,
Thus swayed the balance of eternal thought;
Temporal blessings of a fleeting hour
Obscured his vision, while the future fraught
With glowing wisdom on his temples wrought.
The fens of sorrow to the fields of joy

He dared not travel, lest his power to naught
Be lessened by foes, and a life's annoy
Pursue the flowery path selected to enjoy.

LVI

Thus melancholy ruling in his mind,
Depressed his spirits with its sickly air;
And custom glowing o'er a soul refined,
Prevailed on reason to forego despair
Of carnal pleasures in the frenzied glare
Of disappointment, and the hope pursue
Of finding comfort and a goodly share,
Among the pastimes of his harem's crew,
Till from redeeming grace his testy fancy flew.

LVII

Thus like the bison when the prairie fire,
In raging fury of the tempest sweeps
And circles safely round the settler's pyre,
Whereon he loiters near the blackened heaps,
He watches blandly while the mad flame creeps,
A frightful demon, round his safe retreat;
But when the smoke wreath from the embers leaps,
And travels toward him, his despairing feet
Through the devouring flames his frightful pathway
beat.

LVIII

So fared the Kadi, to destruction lured,
Avoiding worry from consuming flames
Of blighting passion which his youth endured—
The only essence that redemption names
To free from bondage every soul it claims—
And hurried madly from his racking mind
To brave the coquetry of playful dames—
The slaves of custom and to mercy blind—
And hoped through selfish glee a tranquil peace to
find.

LIX

His harem glittered like a rising star,
Where velvet curtains rippled in the light;
And stained-glass windows threw the rays afar
Of soothing colors for his fevered sight—
The artificial hues that robe the night
And rob the day of life's unselfish beams,
Which mingle darkness and the stupid blight
With blasted freedom from the sordid dreams,
Inspired at reason's dawn from Hebe's rosy gleams.

LX

The frigid galoshes a guard maintained
Against intrusion from a foreign foe;
And like the flamingo their necks they craned
To scan the beauty of the breasts of snow,
Which in the haremlik moved to and fro,
In yawning languor and with pouting face,
To flash their beauty, or in dull repose
Feign oblivion to the awkward grace
With which a rival dame her flaunting garb replace.

LXI

The Kadi's presence roused them to display
Their winsome foibles to attract his eye;
With pouts and smiles the melancholy gay,
In alternating moods both grave and shy,
Feigned indifference to the master's sigh;
Yet sidelong glanced from underneath the lash,
To tempt him onward to a step more nigh:
Nor deem their judgment nor their reason rash,
Since man's the only orb that's lit by Satan's flash.

LXII

The Lygian beauty from her home enslaved,
Survived the heartache that departure wrought;

And freed from memory her fortune craved
The simple freedom the adjemi brought,
Or wand'ring license by the nomad sought ;
Yet drowned her longing in the sparkling wine,
To join the revelries her conscience fought ;
Then waking ever to repent and pine,
Like one who damns the feast then seats himself to
dine.

LXIII

She learned the power of woman's artful smile,
The force of beauty unrestricted saw,
And shammed the license of the court the while
She clung religiously to rule and law.
The hanum followed from her frown the flaw,
And flayed offenders when they doth her wrong ;
The kalfa trembled like a klepht* in awe,
And courted justice from the idle throng,
Lest harmony of strength to such as she belong.

LXIV

The hanum's jealousy with skill she played,
And coaxed the Kadi deftly from her bower ;
The system's curse through rivalry she flayed,
And stript the hanum of her birthright power.
The pouting favorite made the mistress cower
And curse with vengeance her assumed control ;
But true to Islam she renounced the giaour,
And true to nature she conceived the goal,
To play the tyrant's heart against his feeble soul.

LXV

'Tis Islam's promise to the passive slave :
Believe in Islam and her laws embrace,
And freedom rises from the stormy wave,
To carry pleasure to the convert's face ;

* A Greek servant.

And comfort blossoms like a flower to grace
The borrowed splendor of the neophyte,
Which aptly used the harem might replace
With power and justice guiding them aright,
From vain desire and crime to wisdom's promised
light.

LXVI

But she less artful than the European,
Less cunning than the dark Albanian giaour,
Less fretful than the captive Christian queen,
Embraced her folly and forsook her power,
Contented chiefly to remain the flower
Of his idolatry—the harem's chief.
She loved the Kadi and the proffered dower
Of liberty afforded no relief,
Since life was lost in love and love itself was grief.

LXVII

The long-haired Circassian—the Sultan's gift—
Craved milk and honey for her appetite;
Since no ambition served her soul to lift,
Nor even vanity to whet her sight.
Her soul was stifled in the languid blight
Of false refinement through her tender years:
A slave she was since error in its flight
Disgraced her birth, and marred her life with fears;
But nature dimmed her mind and dammed the flow
of tears.

LXVIII

A thrifty hanum purchased her at birth,
And schooled her habits for the harem's trade;
As taught she was in ribaldry and mirth,
To please a custom by the prophets made,
And dance serenely through the light and shade
Of every harem where her lot was cast.

She pleased the pashas when in court arrayed,
Nor spared her beauty from the burning blast
That swept across her years destructively and fast.

LXIX

Distinguished harems of the titled throng
Had seen her dance and play the tambourine,
And mix the melody with scraps of song,
The scattered fragments of some ode between;
Or play the lute to tranquilize a scene
Of lusty beauty lounging in repose
Beneath the colored lights, in gauzy screen,
Arrayed like nymphs before the mabeyn's* glows,
Where they their nurtured charms in triumphs might
disclose.

LXX

Of Kandil Ghedjessi† at once the prize,
Approved by pashas and the courtier train,
She reigned a beauty in the royal eyes
Till favor marked her as a gift again;
To Smyrna's castle she was sent to reign,
But wife and favorite her lot forbade,
So here the freedom which she hoped to gain
Was crushed and stifled, and despairing sad,
Her beauty to destroy, she raved at times like mad.

LXXI

Thus like a breaker rolling toward the shore,
At times foam-crested by the lawless wind,
Yet rising proudly to resume once more
The lordly tenor of the unconfined,
Then sinking gently to the sea resigned,
To rise again 'mid seething storm and lash,

*The master's quarters.

† Annual feast, where a beautiful slave is presented to the Sultan.

And mock the echoes of the sea mews' kind,
While force and vigor lent a dazzling flash;
Then break upon the rocks a melancholy crash

LXXII

Her life tempestuous by chance controlled,
Was wooed and petted while her beauty reigned;
But Time's designer as it onward rolled,
Brought aged wrinkles and her beauty stained
With sickly color, while her beauty waned;
Yet changeful fortunes like the wreckage tossed,
At first were buoyant from fresh motion gained;
But sinking sourly when by rivals crossed,
A hateful temper nursed till all her charms were lost

LXXIII

The tranquil Georgian—the Christian maid—
Accepted sadly her forsaken state,
While musing memory brought her highland glade
To mingle sorrows with her prison mate,
And poison pleasure by a stroke of fate;
As through her struggle would her conscience rule,
The pensive tyrant of the love and hate,
Together nurtured in the social school,
Where creed creates the power and life becomes the
tool.

LXXIV

Her blasted hopes spread silver through her hair,
Though tender years embraced her broken form;
Her days were spent in thought, her nights in
prayer,
While in her life no accent of the storm
That waxed within her soul betrayed the harm
To strength and vigor that were raging there.
While the clay was icy the soul was warm,

Though joy had perished, yet the dark despair
Of death's redeeming hand was fraught with pleasure's glare.

LXXV

With pleasure's glare from odalisques* and slaves,
Carousing nightly o'er the gibe and jest;
She listened solemnly to feigning knaves,
And borrowed comfort from the Promised Rest
That quelled the turbulence within her breast.
She played the lute to cast distrust away,
But all its echoes like a soul distressed,
Betrayed her madness in a doleful lay
That mixed with mirth her fears, dejection with her play.

LXXVI

She deigned at abtest† to assist in song,
The ezan‡ answered like a Moslem bred,
Yet Christian scruples in her heart were strong,
And oft her conscience for her folly bled.
So thus she offered through the ordeal dread,
To brave the terrors of a Christian hell,
But gain her freedom ere her life was sped,
And view once more the solitary dell
Where youthful beauty cast her life's enchanted spell.

LXXVII

During Ramazan§ with the Kadi dined,
And quaffed the raki || to excite her brain,
She sought through pleasure to relieve the mind,
And banish sorrows' never-ceasing train
Of fiery torments burning in each vein;
Nor cared she whether each resultant joy

* Wives.

† Ablutions preceding prayer.

‡ Call to prayer.

§ A kind of liquor.

|| A fast of a month declared of divine institution.

Attached to vigor a destructive strain;
For broke with sadness she would fain destroy
The temple of her soul to sever earth's annoy.

LXXVIII

But since the beauty perished on her brow,
And soul attraction vanished from her eye,
Her life was calm as custom would allow,
Provoking scarcely a reflective sigh,
Unless o'er memories of days gone by.
As harem life for those who in decay
Forsake their pleasures and their cares deny,
Is harassed only by the stormy way
In which the conscience beats against its walls of clay.

LXXIX

'Tis thus that fancy like a tyrant reigns,
Enforcing action to obey the will;
While stubborn fashion more accretion gains,
More soothing ferments will the heart distil
To ease the mind for Pleasure's joyful thrill;
But custom's trumpet and the habit's blare
Decline in echoes when the frigid chill
Of scruples racking reassert their care,
'And hold before the soul damnation's fearful glare.

LXXX

So minds in darkness ne'er conceive the light,
Yet bar intrusion of the faintest ray;
They grope in darkness through the murky night,
And crown with terrors the approaching day,
Which glows with promise e'en to those astray.
Thus heaven's pledges to those tainted souls
Lead not to glory the benighted way;
As all are stranded on dogmatic shoals,
'Gainst which the surging sea of time's improvement
rolls.

LXXXI

The eunuchs guarded with religious care
 The Syrian mother and her dimpled child,
 As babes in harems are as prized as rare,
 And share the estates like the undefiled.
 "Maternity and Freedom," harem styled,
 Make mothers hanums and their offspring free!
 Yet still she lingered where delusion smiled,
 Nor from the custom nor its shards she'd flee,
 But strove to please desire, her fickle vanity.

LXXXII

To each delusion she a welcome gave,
 As each was something to promote desire;
 Nor sought she profit, nor beyond the grave,
 Some stored indulgence to escape the fire.
 Her child the image of its swarthy sire,
 Was nursed and welcomed as if wedlock blest
 By sacred dughun* from the incense pyre,
 United parents by the crown or crest
 Of royal blood's esteem or beauty's portly breast.

LXXXIII

The harem's twaddle new attractions lent,
 The hanum's notice equal honors shared,
 But self-conceit is never fully spent
 Till human sorrow by distress is bared;
 So she unmindful how the future glared
 O'er gloss and wrinkle and the spoils of age,
 Besought the present where allurements blared,
 To fill her cup with life's enchanting rage—
 The dregs of discontent that bubbling pleasures guage.

LXXXIV

To reign a fav'rite strengthened her desire;
 Ambition urged her to assume control;

* Marriage festivities, etc.

Though rivals passed her while the vim and fire
Of youth and beauty sparkled from her soul,
She still had hope to reach the envied goal,
When all the magic of her youth was fled.
Thus Hope-Destroyer—heaping coal on coal—
On every anguish of her heart was fed,
Till all without her life were ruthless, cold, and dead.

LXXXV

'Twas here Alixis moaned her life away,
And from the tandour* selfish comfort sought;
The noisy harem frolicked night and day
Before the chamber where her life was fraught
With ache and anguish, as if Pleasure brought
The rippling laughter and the repartee
To cheer and comfort; while the dying thought
Was far from folly and its lusty glee,
Beyond this vale of tears where souls at last are free.

LXXXVI

The inmates cheered her with their mirth and jest,
If mirth could mingle with despairing grief;
And every moment brought an anxious guest,
To offer hope or proffer short relief,
From busy kalfas and the harem's chief.
As souls in sorrow rise above desire,
Beyond the limits of a creed's belief,
So sparks eternal of celestial fire,
Illume the doctrines and consume the jealous pyre.

LXXXVII

Dead falls the merriment, when sad the heart,
In pensive sorrow and reflection thrives,
When hopes but echo the romantic part
That dam the channels of responsive lives,
While Fear with Terror Comprehension rives.

* A heating apparatus.

The laughter ripples like a sad refrain
From coffined silence, while the fever drives
The panting passions through the frenzied brain,
And mingles ache and joy in every burning vein.

LXXXVIII

As fair coronas circle 'round the sun,
And like the rainbow blend their varied hues;
The fairy texture from the haze is won,
While mingling lights all colors will diffuse;
But when attraction doth abstract the dews,
The colors vanish in the fading haze.
And so with maidens in their safe recluse
Where charms attract and beauty must amaze,
But take from life its mist and beauty flees the gaze.

LXXXIX

But here the blithe their lusty life restrained,
As some faint echo challenges the soul:
And all responsive while the silence reigned,
Caught feeble rumblings of the Edjel's* roll,
Whose vibrant ripple like a swaying scroll,
Caused all to hearken to the dread command.
'Twas Allah's signal that a mortal goal
Was reached, and summoned was the active hand
To pass from cares of earth to heaven's golden strand.

XC

A moment's silence and the panting hearts
Regained their functions, and the dewy eyes
Beamed fond affection, while the teardrop starts
To trickle downward, mingling with the cries,
The heaving bosoms in confusion rise;
Till of the living all are satisfied
That none must wear the "cup bearer's" disguise.
Then to the chamber where Alixis tried
To stem the tide of death with flying feet they hied.

* A call of death firmly believed in in Moslem countries.

CHAPTER IV.

I

If man's salvation should of time demand
A life on every cycling planet's face,
Where torrid suns employ the burning sand
His bleeding footsteps through the wilds to trace;
If icy blasts pursue his famished race
Through den and cavern and the ice-clad shore,
Where darkness thickens with a sullen grace
In murky silence, and the torrents pour
Their never-ceasing floods with fierce, incessant roar;

II

If doom should bind him to this woeful earth,
To toil in sorrow and in sin to die,
And again advance through another birth:
To live and die through all eternity;
And sinking lower as the ages fly,
Till on a level with the beast he strives
Again to struggle for rewards on high;
Though countless ages his succession drives,
And every error still demands a thousand lives.

III

Or if the worst that could befall mankind—
A tempting Devil and his fearful hell
To coax the passions and persuade the mind—
Should in each body like a tyrant dwell;
And o'er the virtues like a torrent swell,
And sink them downward to debasing chains,
By habit fastened 'round each prison cell,
Where all that's worthy of the life remains
Immured in silent thought while hell triumphant
reigns.

IV

If all the tortures that the Past could spare,
To rob the Present of its hope and peace,
And soil the Future with the frightful glare
Of Hells and Demons with a birthright lease
On every mortal which shall never cease,
Till all are damned in the eternal flame,
Could on me fasten and defy release,
They'd still be torture of a nature tame,
Compared with my despair when Resin's story came.

V

To God in prayerful trust I cried aloud:
My prayers were echoed by the silent rocks;
My blood was burning like the boiling cloud
Above the crater when the broken locks
Of nature's bulwark all creation mocks;
And the burning ocean of pent-up force
Regaining freedom, while volcanic shocks
And trembling earthquakes baffle judgment's source,
Was like my reeling brain when viewing the tyrant's
course.

VI

My breath was burning like a draught from hell,
Like seething geysers seemed my boiling veins,
And every effort of my bosom's swell
Was rent and tortured by the racking pains.
O Apperception! that the conscious brains
Can like a pestilence destroy the mind,
When brooding sorrow in the soul remains;
And simple blessedness is left behind,
Too holy for revenge and ne'er to mercy blind!

VII

The pangs of grief when tears refuse to flow,
Defy specific to allay or cure;

And choke the heart with sighs that overflow
 The brain with fancies destined to endure
 The frightful horrors that distress insure;
 Till steeped with madness the infected frame
 Obeys the impulse for revenge secure,
 And follows fiercely the unholy flame
 That rises from the dust of man's insensate claim.

VIII

Revenge? How human, vengeance to demand!
 How low the nature that thy counsel seek!
 How base the life that cannot understand
 The voice of heaven through the conscience speak!
 But ah! to horalize proscribes the weak,
 When anger bids me jeopardize my soul;
 And judgment rises like a mountain peak
 To lure me onward to requital's goal
 Where for the distant eye lies retribution's scroll!

Heaven preserves the balance for our cares,
 But grants us freedom when we judge our foes;
 Or rather leaves us to the tempting snares,
 To nurse the sorrow of tormenting woes,
 And fill with anger till it overflows
 And spreads its poison through the mind and flesh,
 Which like the serpent whose proportion grows
 From pent-up wrath, enlarges till the mesh
 Ensnares the outraged soul and keeps affliction fresh.

X

So I, enraged, crept madly through the flood
 With hadji's* hood and whetted yataghan,†
 Praying and seeking for the Kadi's blood,
 Disclosing weakness to conceal my plan;
 For Turkey pities the afflicted man,
 And opens havens barred against the sane;
 His every sorrow has a bridge to span,

* A pilgrim, a wanderer for a religious purpose.

† A large knife or small sword.

Save that which rises from affection's reign—
The only wound that keeps an everlasting pain.

XI

So through the wilderness and arid waste,
Through crowded cities, over fertile plains,
Through mountain passes where the streams in
haste
Deface the profile when the swelling rains,
Dissolving snows, and the ice-pressed moraines,
Against defenceless clay their torrents fling,
Obeying rumors and the idle strains
Of guilty gossip to direct my wing,
While to my wild resolve tenaciously I cling.

XII

I journeyed, seeking through the harem's cells,
As none were closed against my feigned desire,
To find Alixis with her cap and bells,
And roast the Kadi on his funeral pyre—
The drastic judgment of my morbid ire.
So anger lured me and revenge was sweet,
The only fare that filled my soul with fire;
And hounds of hell were routed in defeat
Before the seething storm that filled my soul's retreat.

XIII

I sang the namaz* toward the Meccan Mosque,
And in the fast observed the Ramazan;
I praised the nobles of Yildiz Kiosk,
While burning vengeance through my system ran.
The melvud† found me lauding the firman‡
As o'er the pilgrims passed my searching eye,
Who prostrate offered sacrifice to fan
The flame of pleasure in excitement's sigh,

* A formal prayer. All prayers are said facing Mecca. Yildiz Kiosk—home of the Sultan.

† A holiday.

‡ An imperial order.

And leave the love of life in Allah blazing high.

XIV

My father's God I worshipped in despair,
 And sang to Allah simulated zeal;
 I offered Christ my poor Alixis' prayer—
 The first that served my wounded heart to heal—
 Not for comfort nor for the common weal,
 But for revenge—a mighty stroke of doom
 Against the empire hurled, of fire and steel,
 To mock the living and outrage the tomb—
 But Justice does not spring from Hatred's selfish
 womb.

XV

The Christians heard my woe, the Jews my tale,
 The Turks in sympathy my raving strain;
 But none were conscious of the stormy gale
 That drove its tempests through my racking brain,
 And filled my soul with murder's guilty train.
 The broad extending, sympathetic palms,
 Affording shelter from the heat and rain,
 Profuse in Charity's supporting alms,
 Shielded my houseless head from tempests, blasts,
 and calms.

XVI

I sought the Mollahs,* at the Kiblahs† glared,
 Approached the Imams while the Mihrabs‡
 frowned;
 My interruptions through disorder flared
 And spread my weakness through the country
 'round;

* Judges or preachers.

† A niche in the wall of every Moslem's house, indicating the direction of Mecca, toward which they face in prayer.

‡ The choirs.

Where'er I went my worldly joys were crowned,
And those who erstwhile spurned me to the dust
Were prone to succor while their kindness ground
The rock of vengeance and its torpid crust
From off my inner soul—the seat of love and trust.

*Judges or preachers.

†A niche in the wall of every Moslem's house, indicating the direction of Mecca, toward which they face in prayer.

‡The choirs.

XVII

The more my confidence in man was raised,
The more my hatred of the harem fell;
For man subtends what man triumphant praised,
E'en though the triumph be a spark from hell.
Yet every heartbeat tolled the Kadi's knell,
As my remittance him alone refused.
Thus mankind's folly like the magnet cell,
Some subtle healing through the life diffused,
And fiery hate remains and grows where'er infused.

XVIII

Within the Medresseh* where Calan stood,
Above the ruin where her pile is spread,
I watched the kadis in teraweh's† hood,
Telling their beads, contritely bowing the head,
And penitent, as if a Saviour bled
To lead them safely from despair and sin.
Those holy men whose selfish lusts seemed dead,
To take Alixis from her home and kin
And blast my cherished dream that lived her love to
win!

* A college chapel or mosque.

† A white turban worn at the Ramazan.

XIX

But man is human and his passions sway
 His better judgment, like a tempter, steals
 And flings the trophies from his soul away,
 While mad contention in his reason reels;
 His soul must follow, for the mortal heals
 With soothing comfort what his conscience strained.
 The divine is quenched where the sinner kneels,
 Imploring pardon for a life that reigned
 In satanic triumph with moral virtues feigned.

XX

Without atonement for what sin hath wrought,
 Without the ointment to allay the pain
 That deprivation in the heart and thought,
 Had poured in torrents like descending rain;
 Without relinquishing the guilty gain—
 The fiendish conquest that degrades the soul—
 No worldly off'ring in a sacred fane,
 No burning incense where cantatas roll,
 Can blot a single sin from Judgment's blameless
 scroll.

XXI

The kadis prayed, salaamed, and kissed the stone.
 The dancing dervishes with kulahs* drawn,
 In wild gyrations like the dead leaves blown
 Before a zephyr on a frosty lawn,
 Frolicked fiercely as if celestial dawn
 Depended solely on their steps and prayers.
 They're holy men! no matter what the spawn
 Of their origin or absorbing cares,
 They wrong not any man nor cherish custom's
 glares!

* Monastic headdress.

XXII

I saw no sinner in that pious throng,
Nor wished to seek for what the past had been,
Among the ruin which the ages long
Had mounded o'er the hopes of trusty men;
I wandered onward where the lark and wren
Reflected nature in their happiness;
Pleased with the harvest field and upland glen,
They chirped and carolled as if sent to bless
The only ray of hope that fell on my distress.

XXIII

Where Asshur boasted in her days of might
Of lofty temples for the sun-god decked,
Is now a wilderness where want and blight
Are crowned triumphant, while their reign unchecked,
A common tenure in the soil has wrecked.
Poverty, abasement, and the stupid thrall
Of wasted splendor on the vision flecked!
While one gay mansion rises o'er the fall
To serve the old régime and damn the hopes of all.

XXIV

A kadi's castle ruling o'er the moor,
Dispensing justice from the Koran's page,
Let me—a mendicant bereft and poor—
Seek every stall my fancy to assuage;
And still forbearance my astounding rage
With patience greeted and soothed me to be calm.
The circled harem, like a gloomy cage
Was opened for me, so the evening psalm
Might send my worried soul an ease-diffusing balm.

XXV

In stalls and soft divans I sought the maids,
A goodly number for a sybarite.

Their sneers of contempt, through their dangling
 braids,
 Their fierce displeasure at my unkempt sight,
 Abashed me not nor changed desire to flight.
 I searched the harem-lik, the mabeyn, too,
 But no Alixis, no Assyrian white,
 Among the swarthy dames that met my view!
 Yet in my angry soul dire vengeance deeper grew.

XXVI

The dijins* of Eblis, so the Kadi said,
 Deranged my vision and my will controlled.
 So devrs† were chanted and teraweh‡ read,
 (While nonchalantly through the halls I strolled)
 That Allah's judgment might release its hold,
 And leave me normal, from delusion free,
 That peris§ crown me with substantial gold,
 And guide me victor o'er my enemy;
 As if their prayers could soothe the waves of life for
 me.

XXVII

Yet no one feared me, my hectoring sway
 And fearless flourish of intrepid steel
 Caused none to vary from my path away.
 As nature teaches with a fervent zeal
 The life of mankind to defend its weal
 Against the shafts of danger and of woe,
 She teaches also what the wary feel—
 To pass the anger of a noisy foe
 Whose passion spouts and fumes yet dares not strike
 the blow.

* Agents of Satan.

† Hymns.

‡ Formal prayers.

§ Good angels.

XXVIII

I wandered lonely till a group of mounds
Before my vision on Euphrates rose ;
The natives told me that these barren grounds
Once nurtured plenty, comfort, and repose ;
That here was cast the die of joys and woes,
The patriarch and epicure to train ;
That every empire from its maxims shows
What lessons practice and from which refrain,
From what was taught by her now scattered o'er the
plain.

XXIX

For here proud Babylon in glory reigned,
The grandest city of the ancient world,
And here her liberty was racked and strained,
And all her trophies to destruction hurled ;
Her spears all gory and her flags unfurled,
Inspired not subjects to defend her call ;
Her orgies quickened while her incense curled
Above her idols, till the lowering thrall
Of annihilation embraced her in its fall.

XXX

Beneath this mound the tower of Babel lies,
That once toward heaven her towering structure
reared ;
But since was blasted by those very skies
That none for mercy from their justice feared.
Since justice happened from the false and weird,
To spread among them her diffusing claims ;
So none but shuddered when the truth appeared
Foretold by porphets from the furnace flames.*
Yet few forsook their sins, their pleasures, or their
shames.

* Daniel, Jeremiah and Ezekiel lived and prophesied in Babylon.

XXXI

How oft the matron and the guileless maid
Observed the Beltis with religious zeal!
How oft the Prophets did their laws upbraid,
Demanding mercy lest the Master's seal
Of disapproval on the nation's weal,
Be stamped in anger for the guilty few!
Yet Babel glittered till the fiery steel
Of Right and Virtue did her customs strew,
And sweeter fruits for life in all her vineyards grew.

XXXII

'Another mound! here learning's friends unearth
The stones and sculpture of the royal pile—
The palace famous for its vice and dearth
Of human sympathy, adapted style
For Indolence, religion to defile.
And every relic from the mound retains,
As if imploring from the hours the while
The levied tributes from the Present's pains—
The Past's most potent king asserting that he reigns.*

XXXIII

Like the fading flame of a burnt-out star
Which some misfortune had dethroned from place,
Still brightly gitters from the realms afar
Its flaming orbit through the distant space;
She flickers yet as if the human race
Receives its knowledge from her dying glow.
Perhaps it does! for customs just as base,
Subvert the virtues nor allow them grow!
But Right shall always rise and error overthrow!

* The name of Nabuchodnezzer or his official signet mark is on every relic unearthed from the ruins of the palace.

XXXIV

But no Alixis in their harems dwelt,
No ancient splendor near the Persian door!
So through the tamarinks that deeply belt
The desert's border to the Dead Sea shore,
I strained supremely, gloating in the gore
That anticipation like water shed;
Searching harems and sacking sofra's* store
Without a protest on my lawless head,
Since Allah bids his race, "The feeble must be fed."

XXXV

To Jerusalem and her jealous creeds,
My errant judgment lured my wild desire,
Among the Moslems and the various breeds
Of Jew and Christian, like a craving friar,
I mingled shyly, feigning sacred fire
Of inspiration; at the altars knelt
Of every sacrifice and burning pyre;
Professing all doctrines where none were felt;
And wearing on my back the pilgrim's vicious welt.

XXXVI

Among the chenguing† on the Market Place,
I mixed to query from those roving giaours,
If in their ramblings they had seen a face
Of angel beauty hiding in the bowers
Of skipe‡ or kadi, where the richest dowers
Were lavished freely, setting off her charms.
They mentioned Georgia, where the blessed show-
ers
Of generous beauty, descending, harms,
And spreads among the hills war's thunders and
alarms.

* A tray stand usually laden with victuals.

† Rovers who refuse to accept any faith.

‡ A robber.

XXXVII

They scorned the judgment which to Beauty gave
 The meed that Virtue through her spotless reign,
 Had rescued from the voluptuous grave
 Of blasted empires, strewn upon the plain;
 And blessed the poverty for vices slain,
 For maiden modesty and moral wealth.
 Not theirs the luxury nor greed for gain,
 The mind for conquest nor the eye for stealth!
 But happily they roam content with peace and health.

XXXVIII

And from the softas* 'neath the mekteb's† roof,
 I heard the stories of the harem told:
 How pride and beauty serve the warp and woof
 That fashion Turkey to her luckless hold,
 And bind the young to transgress like the old.
 They damn the custom, but obey its call,
 Assail the prudence and the love for gold,
 Which lead the hanums to devote their all
 To training brilliant minds for harem's drowsy thrall.

XXXIX

The churlish pilgrims at the Wailing Place,
 Denounced my mission and condemned my pride;
 Held woman's weakness the defiling trace
 Of Satan's presence where his will is plied
 Among the weaklings who his strength defied;
 And offered wisdom from their famished lives,
 To fill the channels in my life denied.
 But spring is reckless and the winter drives
 The many errors grown where seasoned wisdom
 thrives.

* Students.

† A school.

XL

Through languid harems and the leper's huts,
On hills where Solomon and David stood,
Through famed cathedrals and where tekkeh shuts
Its sacred entrance on the hadji's hood;
Through ancient synagogues where Ghershom
could
Recall his doctrine from oblivion's grave,
I wandered, trusting in the pure and good,
Observing only what contentions save
From age's sombre dress to deck the passing wave.

XLI

How slow the fancy and how dull the brain
That honor weapons on an altar pile!
How short the future of the gorgeous train
That plumes the warrior to adjust the style!
The race supports him in a single file,
Neglecting duties toward the future's claim;
And Hell triumphant through this carnal wile,
Infuses customs to degrade and shame,
And makes the gory hand dispense all power and
fame.

XLII

The sword of David in a synagogue,
The shield of Joshua above the door,
The pike of Moses like a sailor's log,
Recalling exploits from the misty lore
Of myth and miracle that saints adore.
So all the trophies of the carnal field
From broken effigy to human gore
That rust had driven through the brazen shield,
Are saved to swell the ranks of slaughter's fearful
yield.

XLIII

To Nazareth my new-found glory led,
To search the structures famed throughout the
earth,
And meet the Sadducees by empire fed,
To preach Mahomet and his patent worth
To wealthy tourists whose religious dearth
Invite their footsteps to this sacred land;
As if their presence should demand a birth
Of Sage or Prophet to direct his hand
To barter heaven's gold at their profane command.

XLIV

I felt some traveller would Alixis see,
And note her beauty and her hateful thrall,
And bring the message like a sprite to me
Who'd break her bondage or assailing fall.
I know the sympathy that lies o'er all
Is set in motion by the silent thought;
As mind to mind can answer, plead, or call,
And spread its pinions where its shafts are
wrought,
To prey on every mind where harmony is sought.

XLV

Some Cretans told me at the Virgin's Well,
That north from Sidon on the lusty shore,
Beneath the cedars in a forest cell
Where mountain hurricanes pass lightly o'er,
They saw a maiden near a small tandour,
Of queenly beauty with a swarthy knave—
A skipe or robber from the Caspian shore —
Who watched her motions with his gun and glaive,
And held her captive in his rustic forest cave.

XLVI

The calm Franciscans begged me to remain,
Lest ruthless passion should enthrone my hate,
And from excessive temper to refrain,
As foolish vengeance e'en destroys the great.
But oh! if such should be Alixis' fate!
Thus single-handed 'gainst the robber's blade,
My eye would melt him to the menial state;
My hand would crush him to a ghastly shade,
And from our sight his form would thence forever
fade!

XLVII

The night of Canaan darkened 'round my head,
The distant stars hung deeply in the sky,
The path of Joseph bent beneath my tread,
And Mary's cottage rose before my eye:
Those sacred sites, I lightly passed them by;
'Twas now the rescue that burned in my brain,
And fond devotion led my soul to try;
So through the midnight on the nervous strain,
I urged my hast'ning feet to reach the surging main.

XLVIII

And ere the mid-day crowned the Eastern hills,
My feet were bounding o'er the ruins of Tyre,
O'er scenes where stranger every valley tills
Since first Sennecharib with heart afire,
And Alexander's unrestrained desire
Assailed the freedom in those valleys grown.
Now every blessing rises to retire,
Or fly to climates where thy fate's unknown,
And freeborn sons prepare the pillars for the throne!

XLIX

So close to Nazareth, Mahomet rules!
Cradle of commerce! the surrounding sea

Conveys no transports from progressive schools;
 Shrine of freedom! thy sons no longer free,
 Unite the empires in a tryst with thee:
 The countless splendors of the Tyrian shore
 Have outlived their time, and eternity
 Surrounds tradition. So the cheerless door
 Will close on all we love like all who've gone before.

L

Like a conflagration an empire grows,
 Existing only in the ruddy blaze;
 Her power is quickened and her glory glows
 While tongues of flame illumine a tangled maze,
 Till eyes beholding blinded by the daze,
 Mistake the vices for the virtues fast.
 So quick consumption will the structure raze;
 And on the wreck all jealous foes are cast,
 Like cormorants to gorge, or blow their battle blast.

LI

The imaret* my craving wants supplied,
 The shekh advised me to pursue my way
 With safe directions to the forest wide,
 That borders closely the encroaching bay.
 The silver moonlight on the white road lay
 In naked grandeur like a flowery scene,
 Adorning palm and plane tree with a day
 Of seraphic splendor, the vale between
 With every colored tint that light and shade could
 glean.

LII

A night of beauty such as heaven spills
 In rich profusion for her chosen few,
 Decked all the valleys and surrounding hills,
 And distant Sidon† far before my view,

* A charitable institution.

† No longer called Sidon, but Sur.

In colored glory of supernal hue:
The peasant's cottage and the nomad's tent,
In lucid atmosphere to castles grew,
While towering cedars o'er the valley leant
Their many-colored robes in shadows' armament.

LIII

A sumptuous iftar* from a pasha's plate,
With mezzliks† seasoned for the appetite,
Appeased my hunger and allayed my hate,
And set the functions of my reason right,
Before attempting to engage in fight
A worthy claimant of a royal line.
And yet the beauty of the last moonlight
Glittered in my soul with the sparkling wine
That soothed away my cares and bade my spirits
shine.

LIV

My vengeance lessened and my courage rose
Above encounters that destruction sought,
To tranquil calmness that new life bestows
When mind has risen from the sickly thought
Of self-debasement which with anger fraught,
Deranges muscle and despoils the will.
I viewed old Sidon what the present brought
From battle wreckage 'neath the hoary hill
That covered up the guilt of ancient pride and frill.

LV

And then I journeyed o'er the rugged beach,
Above the surging of the breaking waves,
To find an inlet where the tide plains reach;
And weeping cypress like a mourner laves

* A meal.

† Spices.

Its drooping branches where the mad sea raves ;
To find the grotto where my fiery brain
Believed Alixis with the worst of knaves ;
And slay the tyrant and his sordid reign,
And bear my love away from agony and pain.

LVI

I found the grotto and the sheltered slope,
The swarthy brigand and his fiery bride,
And disappointment mingled with my hope,
When fair Alixis was to me denied
By e'en this robber on the mountain side.
The savage matron to Alixis bore
No close resemblance, as such beauty dried,
Like the sunken rind on the apple core,
Which grants the shriveled form no beauty to adore.

LVII

I sipped their viands and they heard my tale ;
The fiery bandit dreadful vengeance swore,
And urged me breast the tempest and the gale
To bathe my weapon in the Kadi's gore ;
He told me pathways 'round the broken shore,
That led to harems of the richest kind,
And traversed valleys where the famed of yore
Employed the muscle, but neglected mind,
And strove through creed and gain Perfection's face
to find.

LVIII

He led me safely to the klepht's reserve,
And introduced me to their grace and care,
With full directions not to fail or swerve,
Nor lay the burden of my mission bare
To those entangled in religion's snare ;
But place my trust in outlaw, skipe, or thief,

Who'll never spread it with a frenzied blare,
But suffer with me in a common grief,
Since none can mend the heart that beats above relief.

LIX

With them I entered in a secret cave,
Where lordly Lebanon slopes toward the sea;
And heard beneath the surging of the wave,
While joke, anecdote, and vivacious glee
Banished dejection, so we all were free
To mingle boldly in desire and plan,
That all had promised their support to me:
'Twas such assistance as the brigand clan
Could muster into use to thwart the power of man.

LX

The word from outlaw to accomplice spread,
To aid my mission and detect the maid;
And trusty stewards in the palace fed,
Beheld their brothers in my cause arrayed;
As every household has some craft or trade
By skipe or klepht or relative performed.
So many pondered to direct my blade,
While others vainly at oppression stormed,
And urged me strike the blow while anger's foam was
formed.

LXI

My heart overflowed for those savage men
Who refused submission to tribe or throne,
And bartered mansions for a mountain den
Where sun and shadow are alike unknown;
But in whose lives the light of justice shone
Without a flicker from the winds of fate;
And for our sorrows they would weep and groan,
As if affliction at their board was sate
To chain their freeborn souls with links of thralldom's
state.

LXII

I loved them for it, and their care repaid
With faithful promise to support my trust.
'Twas all they asked for courtesy and aid,
For mountain passage and the naked crust;
For theirs is not of luxury the lust,
But simple freedom such as honor craves;
And friendship bound me to their caverns just
As love conducts us to our loved one's graves.
Such were the loyal friends I found within those **caves**.

LXIII

Their guidance brought me to the lofty ford
Where swift Adonis empties forth the gore,
Forever surging from the fountains stored
From Syria's Hunter by the mountain bore;
And Venus lingers as she did of yore
To mourn and sorrow at her lover's bier.
And youth and maiden still the stream adore
As Love's disaster what we all should fear—
That true love never shall attain perfection here.

LXIV

The surging waves that toss in bloody foam,*
Bespeak the legend of the lover's fate;
'Twas his! 'tis mine, and ever will it roam,
To caution lovers ere they reach the gate
Of silent Longing where the wild boars wait,
Of pressing dangers from the jealous world,
Which lure them outward like a fish the bait,
Till Moloch's meshes are about them curled,
And every cherished dream to disappointment hurled!

* The source of the Adonis River flows over red sand, which gives the water its ruddy color. The natives firmly believe it to be the blood of Adonis.

LXV

The Groves of Daphne welcomed me with shade,
Where Venus, longing, lived and loved ere Woe
On lovers' shoulders as a burden made
The fiercest tempests of the furies blow,
To blight or banish or to overthrow
The fondest passion of the human soul.
'Tis Satan's triumph to subvert the glow
Of heaven's promise and of mankind's goal,
By cutting Love adrift where adverse breakers roll.

LXVI

The striking vistas of this ancient Grove
Engaged my view where'er I turned my eye,
As every grotto is a sheltered cove
Where fond affection could devotion spy;
And hearts responding pump the fountains dry
Of each endearment rising with each glance;
And jealous ardor each attachment try,
Till Love enraptured worships in a trance,
The shrine of jealous fame that garnished spear and
lance.

LXVII

Orestes' current in the channel flows
Where Typhon trailed his thunder-stricken frame,
When strength was blasted by the mighty blows
Of gods he warred with to support his claim—
The simple glory of a ruling name—
His love was crossed by gods of wondrous power,
Which crushed ambition and the sacred flame,
And sent him downward in the earth to cower.
So all affection still is blighted in the flower.

LXVIII

Though Typhon's breath makes cities shudder still,
His love is conquered by his jealous peer;

And evil passions must his nature fill,
Since love is banished from his heart through fear.
His life is empty and his soul severe
Who loves not something with a fervid glow;
For such a life cannot a god revere,
Who loves not mortals in this world below.
The fount of life is dry when love has ceased to flow!

LXIX

My stay at Antioch like moments flew,
Despite the glories which her vales surround,
Of Mede and Persian, Greek and Roman, too,
Who used her valleys for a fighting ground,
And flung their thunders from each artless mound,
By them directed as strategic points.
The Prophets also preached a gospel found
In love and duty. And the martyr's joints
Were racked and torn apart by laws their creed
anoints.

LXX

Apollo's temple with the Christian cross,
In fierce contention for dominion vied;
And ages reckoned for the gain or loss
That tore them bleeding from each other's side;
And bigots gathered while their glory died,
To fan their fury and to fire their rage,
While fell Destruction on the rivals plied
The fiercest scourging that his art could wage,
Till from their camps were lost the prophet and the
sage.

LXXI

These vales have witnessed what the years have
spent

To garner virtue from Diana's creed;
Yet Truth would conquer if her envoys went
Like Paul and Peter to the halls of greed,
With faith to prompt and charity to lead
The erring brother to a mother's breast.
But no! they battled like the savage breed,
Until religion felt no longer blest,
And sank beneath the strife with proud Diana's crest!

LXXII

Enough of Antioch, to Issus next!
For here the heraldry of fame was bred.
The mighty conquerors whose vaulting text
Was in the glitter of their legions read,
Struggled o'er those plains, while Ambition fed
The burning passion with the empire born,
To rise and sparkle where defenders bled;
But scarcely passed the early dew of morn
Before a mightier foe appeared with glaive and horn.

LXXIII

A lonely pearl on a solitary plain,
That none but chieftains can thy wealth behold!
A point of strategy enhancing gain
For him whose armies had embraced the hold
That swung the doors on Asia's treasured gold!
For here the caravans of western trade
And freighted argosies of wares were sold.
So merchants triumphed till the guilty blade
Provoked the martial din in every glen and glade.

LXXIV

What famous captains have commanded here!
What mighty empires crumbled from the shock!
How earth has gathered from thy sunken bier
The bloated lineage of modern stock!

Enough to shame and all advancement mock,
 Since man's progression is by man destroyed!
 Desire for conquest is the unseen rock
 To which our crafts are cunningly decoyed;
 So Life's exalted aim can never be enjoyed.

LXXV

The tosk* of Issus told me of a train—
 A traveling kadi, odalisque and ghegs†—
 That spent a fortnight on the cedar plain,
 Where wild arbutus and the olive dregs,
 For human notice like a pilgrim begs;
 And with them fairest of the mountain maids,
 A broken captive guarded from the clegs
 By khams‡ and eunuchs in their master's braid,
 Who warred against the gnats that summer tents in-
 vade.

LXXVI

A hasty tour along the broken shore,
 To catch the kadi and his pampered train,
 To Tarsus brought me where the pilgrims pour
 Like mountain torrents to the heaving main,
 To view the Cydnus and the sacred fane
 Where Paul religion to the heathen preached.
 The Roman tetrarchs now no longer reign,
 Nor Heathens worship where the temples bleached,
 But Islam's ruling hand above it all is reached.

LXXVII

I felt the lightning of successful toil
 Around the chambers of my bosom burn,
 And acted slowly lest some demon spoil
 The fond desire whose secret should not turn

* † ‡ Albanian Highlanders representing different tribes.

To vulgar objects, and the mighty spurn ;
My aim was high, my conduct held me low,
But nearer trembled the exalted urn
In which the ashes of a crime should glow,
When through the mail of lust should fall my hateful
blow.

LXXVIII

I crossed the Cydnus in a chiplak's* caique,
And reached the spot where Paul prepared his tent,
And pondered deeply how the Moslems make
Such happy converts where the Master sent
His best disciples to reclaim the bent
Of Roman license and the Delphic tongue.
'Twas then reclaiming from the occident
What ruling scruples from the minions wrung ;
But now the west enjoys Paul's blessings widely flung.

LXXIX

I thought of Paul and all he sacrificed
To spread the glory of a living God ;
Position, pleasure that his heart enticed,
Were held beneath him like the worthless clod
Which totters loosely from the lifted sod.
Thus all were worthless ! when celestial fire
From heaven's glory sparkled in his nod,
He spurned the spawn of fame, and aiming higher,
Brought heaven to every soul that conquered lust's de-
sire.

LXXX

I thought of Paul and Virtue's peaceful lot,
To keep the passion burning in my veins,
From wrecking reason through my mindful plot,
And thwarting justice where the guilty reigns.
I viewed the objects with a Christian's pains,

* An Albanian adventurer.

That linked with Tarsus the heroic saint ;
And with the pilgrims strolled about the plains ;
The ancient city in her splendor quaint,
Embraced within the walls—now bristling with her
 plaint.

LXXXI

Some khams assured me where I sought for aid,
That near encamped among the Phrygian hills,
Stood the Kadi's tent with the mountain maid
For whom my bosom with devotion thrills.
My senses quickened like the leaping rills
That fling their rainbows at the setting sun,
And pressed me forward where affection stills
The turgid fancy and vendettas shun.
But age nor aim can change a passion well begun !

LXXXII

With klephts for guides I climbed upon the crags
And viewed extended the supporting plain
That stretched beneath me like a beggar's rags,
Tattered and broken by the angry main
Whose tides and breakers make the shore complain ;
And lonely islands rising from the waves,
As meant for patches where the bays remain ;
And further seaward where the wild storm raves,
The fog obscures the sight of him who beauty craves.

LXXXIII

The Kadi's tent loomed up before my gaze,
With such of splendor as the Moslem takes,
When summer pleasure from the burning blaze
Of urgent business, his vacation makes ;
And from the burdens of his office wakes,
To live with nature on her tempting green.
It towered beneath me while surrounding lakes
Held every object in their mirrors' sheen,
That man or nature reared as o'er their waters seen.

LXXXIV

I hurried to it with a madness feigned,
And entered boldly to suppress and awe;
But none opposed me while my entrance gained
The well-kept harem that the chiplaks saw.
The ghegs pursued me with a judgment raw,
As if advised by highland brigand clan,
And gave me power to execute the law,
If justice led me to the guilty man,
For none approached to check my flourished yataghan.

LXXXV

The maidens viewed me with suppressed alarm,
And yielded gently while I roughly tore
The yashmak from them, without further harm
To gauze or feridje* or garments wore,
To make the master like a tosk adore.
When I beheld the captive mountain maid—
'Twas not Alixis, but with heart as sore—
Who in the fulness of her nature prayed
For ache's dispelling balm—my keenly burnished
blade—

LXXXVI

I paused a moment, for the Hebrew tongue,
Latent memories in my breast awoke;
And thoughts of childhood to my fancy sprung,
While grief and pity served my voice to choke.
Was this, O Fate! the life-despairing yoke
That poor Alixis was compelled to wear?
Was she now wasting 'neath the blighting stroke,
Like this poor creature dying in despair,
Or could she like the rest assume a joyous air?

LXXXVII

To perish for her would my aim destroy,
Though duty urged me to defend her cause;

* A cloak.

So with the antics of a romping boy
 Whose life is guided but by nature's laws,
 I sought the sofra while observers pause
 Amid their laughter to supply me food.
 'Twas their sahor*, I joined them in the duas,†
 And though perchance my entreaty was rude,
 It blossomed from the heart like wanton act or mood.

LXXXVIII

I wandered westward till the Xanthus spread
 Its placid waters like a stream of gold
 Along the valley, while my fancy fed
 On shifting visions that before me rolled:
 A peaceful city of the Carian mould
 Rising with the myths at the dawn of time;
 By proud Harpagus and the Persian fold
 Destroyed; to rise again in peace sublime,
 Till Brutus' Roman heel finished the Persian crime.

LXXXIX

How strange the vision contemplation brings
 When one can view the works and wrecks of age!
 Earth once trembled beneath the mighty kings
 Who warred to own this solitary page
 Of rugged earth; thrones tottered from the rage
 Of great commanders by ambition fed,
 Who here gained confidence their wars to wage,
 And urge dissensions 'gainst their monarch's head,
 That they in time might rule while feeblers heroes bled.

XC

But long the conquerors and kings are mould!
 What man erected they in haste destroyed!‡

* Supper.

† Blessings.

‡ The Carians were transported to the valley of the Tigris by Darius. Yet it is supposed that a portion of the community which refuses to mingle with the other races are descendants of the ancient Carians.

The Xanthus surges where it always rolled,
Among the hills where jealousy alloyed
With power and passion lofty souls decoyed
To join Ambition in this selfish wreck;
Where human leaders were by fiends annoyed
Till of their efforts not a lasting speck,
Upon the earth remains the hungry eye to check.

XCI

The native Carians, strangers to my tongue,
With signs directed where my path should lead;
Their benevolence like the Moslem's clung
To old traditions in their ancient breed,
Which made of charity the righteous creed.
The land grew rugged till Meander's stream,
Through level marshes with voluptuous greed,
Empties the mountains, where Miletus' gleam
Dazzled the ancient world with commerce, art, and
theme.

XCII

Mother of cities! not a stone remains
For archæologist or architect!
Thy ruin's complete, but not the selfish gains
Of Pylus' plunder or Darius decked
Thy conquerors with a glory unchecked;
For they like thee are buried far and lost
Among the empires that their conquests wrecked;
And of their splendors not a spar embossed
Above the waves appears to show how fame is tossed!

XCIII

My journey brought me o'er the mountain road
Where Brutus, Pylus, and Harpagus led;
Where Alexander, Cræsus, Xerxes strode
In search of plunder or some monarch's head.
No more it trembles from the legion's tread,

As nature's judgment o'er the valleys wrought,
Has left it quiet as the silent dead;
And dark, embracing hills reflect the thought
That works of God remain when art has come to
naught.

XCIV

The passes opened on the chiding shore
Where hostile Amazons repelled the West,
Before the Cayster for Ephesus bore
The sacred spirit for Artemis drest;
As fair Diana's vaulting temple blest
The life and products of the soul and soil;
For here she reared aloft her wondrous crest,
And promised luxury to ease and toil,
For all who her adored and labored in her coil.

XCV

Here Xerxes knelt and Crœsus offered prayer,
When fickle fortune winged her aimless flight,
And left them dwarflings weeping in despair
Beneath divinities they counseled right.
Here Cassius beheld the glowering light
That ripened treason from Ambition's dream,
And gained assistance for his jealous fight
Against the Cæsars and their proud régime,
And tainted Brutus' fame with Envy's languid gleam.

XCVI

Fickle Ephesus, like a false coquette,
Was wooed and won by every cult and art;
Embracing Crœsus ere his glory set,
And cradling Xerxes when his broken heart
Recoiled from Athens with the poisoned dart
Of disappointment buried in its core;
And greeting Romans ere the Greeks depart
With fervid ardor like the war gods bore,
To favor mighty arms and marshalled power adore.

XCVII

It bled for Antony, at Actium wept;
It favored Brutus while his hope was high,
Though fawned on Cæsar when Augustus kept
His star of promise blazing in the sky;
It worshipped Venus till her founts proved dry,
Then made Diana goddess over all;
'Twas Christ's while martyrs heathen gods deny,
And then Mahomet's when he deigned to call;
It worshipped rising gods, but heroes doomed to fall.

XCVIII

As woman's soul is mirrored in her love,
And guides her glances vaulting high or low;
Now at the gates of heaven her wingèd dove,
Now at the flaming furnace far below;
Between extremes the doubtful passions go
And make or break what heritage allowed.
So with Ephesus, grasping friend or foe!
Each rising favorite spread a martial shroud
Around the slighted gods or heroes disavowed.

XCIX

Some skipes assured me that my fate was nigh,
That death was pulsing in my throbbing veins;
As near at hand was heard Alixis' sigh,
Among the harems on the northern plains;
But said not where to keep my addled brains
Within their power till caution ruled their plan;
And servants guided by the Kadi's reins,
Were sworn to serve their native brigand clan,
And aid my murderous hand to wield my yataghan.

C

The information like a sudden blast
Of lightning that spreads rack and ruin 'round,
And leaves one standing where the thunder cast

Its dire explosions with terrific sound,
Among the mangled wrecks that strew'd the
ground,
Left me alone though many to me came;
Their labored counsel my perception drowned.
I heard but one; and no consuming flame
Could burn from out my life that soul-inspiring name.

CI

The skipes advised me, counseled me with care,
And kept me hidden from the motley crowd;
They brought me daily to the house of prayer
That John established, where his mission proud
Is still acknowledged as himself avowed.
I knelt above the little marble cross
Where countless thousands in devotion bowed,
Since Christ's poetic saint abjured the dross
Of Rome's most powerful king his Master's meed to
gross.

CII

I saw with wonder through the trappings quaint
The rude room where the Virgin Mary died,
Where in her strength she served the favored saint
That Christ commended she with him abide,
When dark forebodings of the fatal tide
Were in Him rising with that spark divine:
A human longing with celestial pride,
To save our loved ones and the feeble vine
On which our fruit should thrive when future ages
shine.

CIII

At last the skipes proclaimed the hour at hand
For me to venture my avenging blow;
The Hadith's* promise to the favored land
Allured the Kadi to the Mevlud's glow,

* A pilgrimage to the tomb of the saint whose particular pledge one desires to secure.

To seek relief from suffering and woe.
That I should meet him ere he left his hall,
And send him howling to the realms below ;
With brigand vengeance stamped upon his pall,
Was how the rout was planned to make the tyrant
fall.

CIV

I with them entered Smyrna's thoroughfares,
And crossed the Meles to Mons Pagus' side,
Where o'er the Harmæan the castle stairs
Of the Kadi rose with the gorgeous pride
Of colored festoons which the summer tide,
In glowing splendor lavishly supplies,
Adorned by nature like a waiting bride,
The climbing tendrils in profusion rise,
And o'er the vine-clad walls each floral banner flies.

CV

'Twas beautiful, sublime, and filled with awe,
The wealth and power absorbed from peasant poor ;
So much extravagance observers saw,
As dammed the judgment of the rustic boor ;
Where thousands starved such fashion to insure
For one exalted and refined in power.
'Tis lacking freedom where such souls endure
The tax and torture for Oppression's bower,
Which make subservient men and offspring born to
cower.

CVI

The sights but soothed the rage within my breast,
The rising rage that mirrored like a dream,
The angry stroke that stript the Kadi's crest,
And left his splendor like a fading gleam

Of errant tancy passing with the stream
Of ebbing vigor from his broken form.
'Tis contemplation visionaries deem
With ripe fulfilment, when they fume and storm,
And press their blinded rage to keep their anger
warm.

CVII

'Twas so with me when skipes a last farewell,
With florid promise to avenge my life
And my name exalt when no Christian knell
Should sound my passage from this fearful strife,
Offered and sent me with my thirsty knife,
To seek an entrance to the harem's snare:
As every heart-throb in my breast was rife,
And every pulse-beat in my frame laid bare
The secret of my soul—my burning wish and prayer.

CVIII

I entered here like harems found before;
But oh! what force propelled my bursting heart!
My brain was reeling and the polished floor
Seemed whirling 'round me like a Persian mart.
All disproportioned seemed the works of art
That decked the walls and lined the balustrades;
The lights! each glimmered like a misspent dart,
And danced and flickered o'er the solemn shades,
With here and there a ray that kissed reclining maids.

CIX

I walked among them while the eunuchs kept
Apart, yet close, against my knife to guard;
I roused the maidens who in languor slept,
With such pretension as might best reward
My feigned disguise, nor suffer to regard
My brusque intrusion with distrustful eye.
Yet all of splendor from this scene debarred,

Was lost to beauty when the sunlight nigh,
Fell not on angel forms where fitful shadows fly.

CX

But no Alixis with those boorish maids,
No beaming eyes to welcome my advance!
I dared not question these degraded jades,
Nor offer notice of their pose or dance.
My mind misgave me that the active trance
That lured me forward on this mission wild,
Was rising from me, and the light askance
Of reason o'er me beaming undefiled,
Might send a brighter dawn than that my feet be-
guiled.

CXI

The dark misgivings of distrust and doubt
Besieged my fancy as I gazed around,
And vacant faces circled me about,
Where Hope had pictured and Reliance found
My fair Alixis in seclusion bound.
But toward a chamber where the darkness reigned,
With silent step and awe-inspiring sound,
The ghegs were moving, and with contempt deigned
To watch the murderous wight who madness fairly
feigned.

CXII

I sought the chamber to address the ghegs,
Where faithful kalfas could my words not hear;
And like the hadji who assistance begs,
I sought their presence to command their ear;
When lo! outstretched upon a lowly bier,
Was poor Alixis, pallid, cold, and dead,
With none to offer o'er her fate a tear,
Nor passing ponder how her poor heart bled,
When youth's enchanting dreams from her forever
fled.

CXIII

I dared not weep, although my heart was full,
Nor lay my hand upon her lifeless brow;
My senses wavered, and my heart beat dull
As all my longings were completed now.
I stood in silence gazing on her. How
Pure were the features of her blighted form!
Her face in death the angels might endow
With vivid beauty glowing chaste and warm.
No trace in death remained of life's destructive storm.

CXIV

I could not die while she unburied lay,
Nor could I rest while ghegs her corpse prepared;
I could not hazard to pursue my way,
While e'en her semblance to my sight was spared;
Yet forced delay might see my mission bared
And thwart fulfilment of my lone desire.
So with the atmosphere of one who fared
On thriving chance I ventured to retire,
Though blazing in my breast was hell's consuming
fire.

CXV

To wait the cortège of her sombre train,
And lay a tribute on her new-made grave,
Was all I lived for, though I hoped to gain
A quiet access to the brutal knave
Whose pastime pleasures to the graveyard gave
So much of beauty, chastity, and love;
To see her buried and the boon to crave
To view her features as I shall above,
Where life's advancing soul outwings the flying dove.

CXVI

I wandered madly o'er Mons Pagus' slope,
Observing keenly how the castle door

Was left or entered, with the fervent hope
That soon the coffin I would fain adore,
Would from whence be borne to the stormy shore,
Where peaceful paupers in seclusion sleep.
E'en there I'd watch her as I did of yore,
And from despoilers would her body keep,
Till through my empty veins death's slimy reptiles
creep.

CXVII

How long the minutes of my vigil grew,
With seconds hours, and hours eternities!
How fast reflection o'er my vision flew
When florid pictures of a Paradise
Made fair Alixis on her wings to rise
And hasten to me, when celestial dawn
Should break upon us from the sunset skies;
When I should enter the seraphic lawn,
Fresh from this angry world with gory sabre drawn!

CXVIII

At last the cortège from the portal came;
By braided captains was the casket borne,
And not by ghegs nor by retainers tame;
Nor did they journey to the graveyard, torn
By th' upbraiding sea, where the wild waves mourn
O'er desolate graves, and the seething foam
Flings its briny tears on the new-made bourn
That ope's a hidden world—a welcome home—
To those who conquer death and rise above the tomb.

CXIX

They straightway traveled to the sacred mosque
Where Allah waits to welcome faithful dead;
An Imam first supported by a tosk,
Whose signal duty in the namaz said,
Is prompting answers to the questions sped

By faithful angels to the passing soul.*
Were her emotions by religion fed?
Was Islam's promise her eternal goal,
Or did she seek beyond for other fate's control?

CXX

The highest honor that the royal throne,
Upon believers could in death bestow,
Was to Alixis on her journey shown,
While o'er the sward with muffled step and slow,
Her pall was carried to the mosque aglow
With gilt and jewel, by commanding shekhs
The mourning Kadi in his overflow
Of helpless anguish no compassion seeks,
While from his streaming eyes the tears bedeck his
cheeks.

CXXI

I saw her entered in a cavern vault,
And heard the Imam chant his parting prayer.
I did not see her nor was I at fault,
As Christian custom is unnoticed there;
Nor could I offer from my soul's despair,
A single blossom on her tomb to lay;
I lingered near them like a skipe whose fare
Is flung from pity, yet disdained to pray
For charity's reward starvation to allay.

CXXII

My life was empty as the vacant air,
My soul as lonely as the solemn sea;

* At a Moslem funeral the Imam enters the mosque with the dead, and remains after the mourners have gone to prompt the spirit of the departed in answering correctly the questions asked by the angels, Mounkir and Nekir, who interview the departing soul about religion. The Moslem maintains that the spirit has connection with the body until this interview.

No joy was left to comfort my despair,
Nor wing the echo of a voice to me.
Alone I stood before eternity,
With less of hope to stem my rising grief;
As all had vanished in the breath where she
Took flight beyond our niggardly relief,
And left the wreck of pain to awe Religion's chief.

CXXIII

I sought the Kadi when he homeward turned,
And told him partly from my tale of woe;
I'd tell him all, but he with contempt spurned
The very outrage I would have him know.
So with my yataghan a well-spiced blow,
His bloody entrails o'er the pathway spread;
I grasped them quickly, with his heart below,
And placed them under his astonished head,
Then watched the glaze of death that o'er his features
fled.

CXXIV

Escape I could not and revenge was fleet!
And soon my journey to the unknown shore
Will wing me safely to Alixis' feet,
Where time nor trial will suffer us no more,
To meet the sorrows that we passed before,
As all is over save the law's strong hand,
Which soon will crush me to avenge the gore,
I shed with pleasure; and to save the land
From wretches such as I who justice understand.

CXXV

I fear not judgment nor the fire of hell,
Nor all the terrors which the creeds defy;
As none can torture like the fearful knell
That sounds the echoes of a lover's cry,

Devoted yet bound and at last to die ;
While True Love wanders through an aimless wild,
Knowing the truth yet knowing not where to fly,
By every artifice and ruse beguiled,
In search of her he loved through stormy clime and
mild.

CXXVI

When contemplation to perfection brings
The soul's commission in this mortal clay,
The doubts we flee from in the timely things,
Will in the novelty be cast away ;
And Truth ascending will maintain full sway ;
In every kingdom will her mercy shine ;
And when arrives that welcome, distant day,
Shall Justice drink Mercy's absolving wine,
Nor murder one like me for such a deed as mine.

CXXVII.

But now the fetters from the mind are dropped
And the passive slave has a moment free ;
The channels of revenge at last are stopped,
And conscience trembles at eternity ;
The Court of Heaven may refuse my plea ;
And God's commandment and the broken law,
The joys of heaven may ever shut from me,
And leave me with the damned as one who saw
The path to Paradise yet traveled Satan's draw.

CXXVIII.

So now farewell, my charitable friend,
Farewell forever ! thy devotion kind
Preserved me safely to the tragic end,
Which soon shall free me from the mortal mind
And wing my spirit faster than the wind,
To eternity, distant and severe,
Where future's treasures free my soul shall find,

And with Alixis love without a tear,
Or for my rash revenge exist through fire and fear.

THE END.

GLOSSARY OF MOSLEM WORDS USED.

Abtest—ablution preceding prayer.

Adjemi—a savage.

Aga—a provincial governor.

Bakshish—a gift.

Bektchi—a policeman.

Chenguin—a giaour, a gypsy.

Chiplak—an Albanian in poverty.

Devr—a hymn

Djins—devils.

Doubana—like a drum.

Dua—a blessing.

Dughun—a marriage festival.

Ezan—a call to prayer.

Feridje—a cloak.

Firman—an imperial order.

Galoshes—guards of the harem.

Gheg—an Albanian servant.

Giaour—an unbeliever.

Hadji—a pilgrim.

Hammal—a peasant's cottage (Armenian).

Hanum—head of the harem.

Haremlik—the women's apartment.

Iftar—a meal.

Ikon—a picture.

Imam—a minister.

Imaret—a charitable institution.

Kadi—a judge.

Kadin—a wife.

Kahn—a stable.

Kaik—a small boat.

Kalfa—a servant.

- Kiblah—direction of Mecca.
Kiler—a storeroom, cupboard.
Kanoun—a zither.
Khatib—a penman.
Klepht—a Greek.
Kulah—a monastic headdress.
Mabeyn—man's apartment.
Medressch—a college.
Mekteb—a school.
Mevlud—holiday.
Mezzliks—spice.
Mihrab—a choir.
Mollah—a preacher.
Mudir—a local justice.
Muezzin—one who calls to prayer.
Musdaji—a messenger.
Namaz—form of prayer.
Narghile—water pipes or channels.
Odalisque—a wife.
Raki—liquor.
Ramazan—annual fast.
Sahor—supper.
Saka—a water carrier.
Seraf—banker.
Sofra—a small table.
Softa—a student.
Skipe—a brigand.
Tandour—a heating apparatus.
Tezek—manure dried for fuel.
Tcharshi—a market place.
Temena—obeisance.
Tekkeh—a school where dervishes are trained.
Teraweh—a formal prayer.
Yashmak—a veil.
Yataghan—a long knife.
Yeradji—peasant.
Zaptieh—soldiers.

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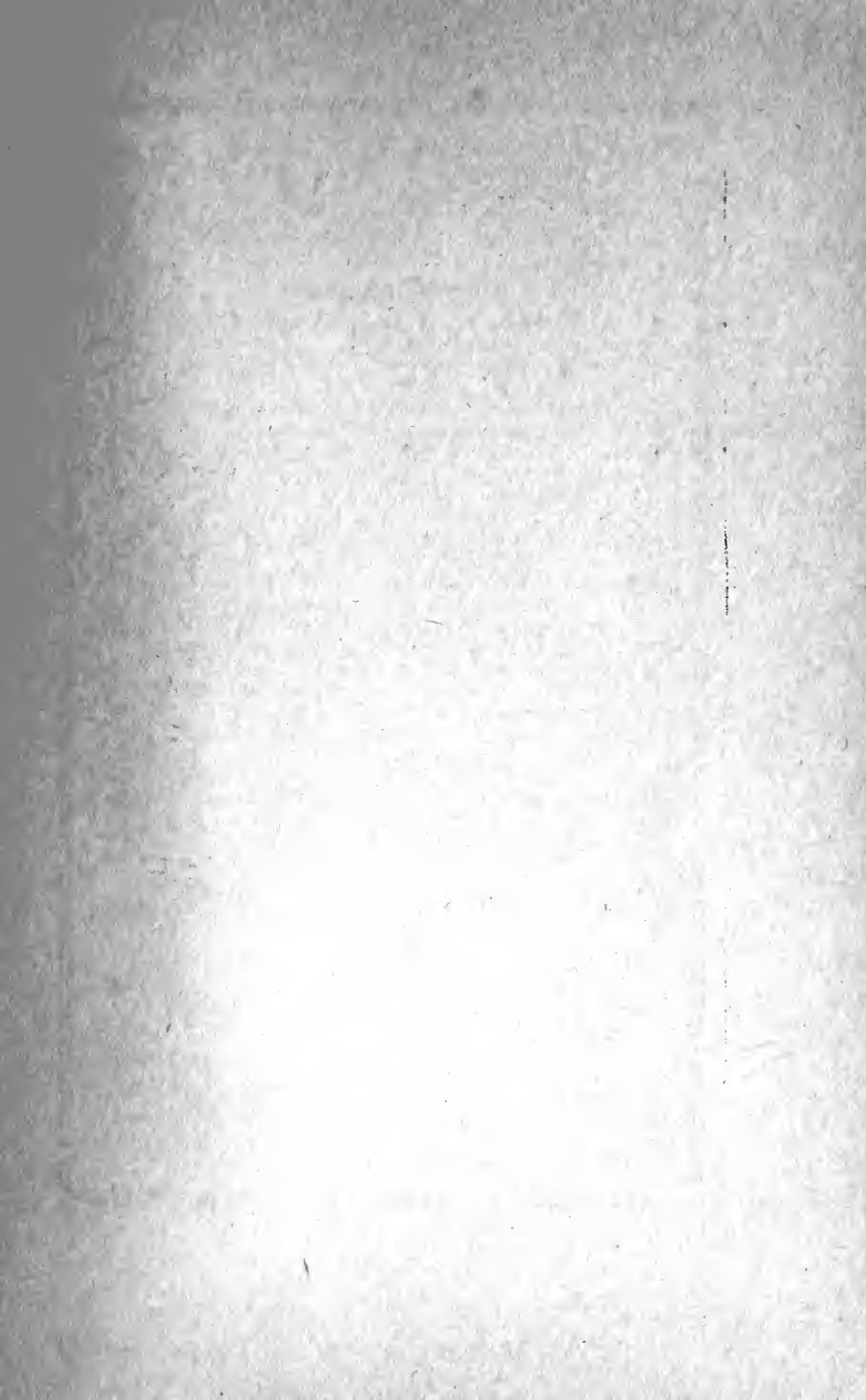
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